THE CAR THAT WENT ABROAD

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

COLL. CHRISTI. REGIS
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TORONTO

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THE CAR
THAT WENT ABROAD

Books by

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

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HARPER & BROTHERS, NEW YORK
Established 1817

[See p. 226

"The Normandy Road to Cherbourg Is as Wonderful as Any in France"

THE CAR THAT WENT ABROAD

Motoring Through the Golden Age

H914.4
P14

By

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

Author of

"THE LURE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN"

"DWELLERS IN ARCADY" ETC.

Illustrated from drawings by

WALTER HALE

COLL. CHRISTI. REGIS
BIB MAJ.
TORONTO

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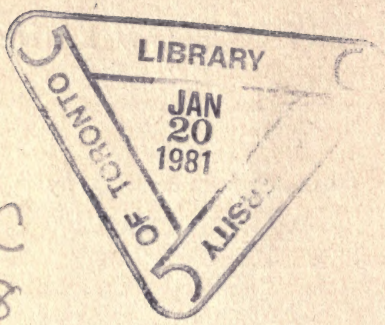

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PREFACE

FELLOW-WANDERER:

The curtain that so long darkened many of the world's happy places is lifted at last. Quaint villages, old cities, rolling hills, and velvet valleys once more beckon to the traveler.

The chapters that follow tell the story of a small family who went gypsying through that golden age before the war when the tree-lined highways of France, the cherry-blossom roads of the Black Forest, and the high trails of Switzerland offered welcome to the motor nomad.

The impressions set down, while the colors were fresh and warm with life, are offered now to those who will give a thought to that time and perhaps go happily wandering through the new age whose dawn is here.

A. B. P.

June, 1921.

Part I

THE CAR THAT WENT ABROAD

THE CAR THAT WENT ABROAD

Chapter I

DON'T HURRY THROUGH MARSEILLES

ORIGINALLY I began this story with a number of instructive chapters on shipping an automobile, and I followed with certain others full of pertinent comment on ocean travel in a day when all the seas were as a great pleasure pond. They were very good chapters, and I hated to part with them, but my publisher had quite positive views on the matter. He said those chapters were about as valuable now as June leaves are in November, so I swept them aside in the same sad way that one disposes of the autumn drift and said I would start with Marseilles, where, after fourteen days of quiet sailing, we landed with our car one late August afternoon.

Most travelers pass through Marseilles hastily—too hastily, it may be, for their profit. It has taken some thousands of years to build the "Pearl of the Mediterranean," and to walk up and down the rue Cannebière and drink coffee and fancy-colored liquids at little tables on the sidewalk, interesting and de-

lightful as that may be, is not to become acquainted with the "pearl"—not in any large sense.

We had a very good and practical reason for not hurrying through Marseilles. It would require a week or more to get our car through the customs and obtain the necessary licenses and memberships for inland travel. Meantime we would do some sight-seeing. We would begin immediately.

Besides facing the Old Port (the ancient harbor) our hotel looked on the end of the Cannebière, which starts at the Quai and extends, as the phrase goes, "as far as India," meaning that the nations of the East as well as those of the West mingle there. We understood the saying as soon as we got into the kaleidoscope. We were rather sober-hued bits ourselves, but there were plenty of the other sort. It was the end of August, and Marseilles is a semi-tropic port. There were plenty of white costumes, of both men and women, and sprinkled among them the red fezzes and embroidered coats and sashes of Algiers, Morocco, and the Farther East. And there were ladies in filmy things, with bright hats and parasols; and soldiers in uniforms of red and blue, while the wide pavements of that dazzling street were literally covered with little tables, almost to the edges. And all those gay people who were not walking up and down, chatting and laughing, were seated at the little tables with red and green and yellow drinks before them and pitchers of ice or tiny cups of coffee, and all the seated people were laughing and chattering, too, or reading papers and smoking, and nobody seemed to have a sorrow or a care in the world. It was

really an inspiring sight, after the long, quiet days on the ship, and we loitered to enjoy it. It was very busy around us. Tramcars jangled, motors honked, truckmen and cabmen cracked their whips incessantly. Newswomen, their aprons full of long pockets stuffed with papers, offered us journals in phrases that I did not recognize as being in my French phonograph; cabmen hailed us in more or less English and wanted to drive us somewhere; flower sellers' booths lined both sides of a short street, and pretty girls held up nosegays for us to see. Now and then a beggar put out a hand.

The pretty drinks and certain ices we saw made us covetous for them, but we had not yet the courage to mingle with those gay people and try our new machine-made French right there before everybody. So we slipped into a dainty place—a *pâtisserie boulangerie*—and ordered coffee and chocolate ice cream, and after long explanations on both sides got iced coffee and hot chocolate, which was doing rather well, we thought, for the first time, and, anyhow, it was quite delicious and served by a pretty girl whose French was so limpid that one could make himself believe he understood it, because it was pure music, which is not a matter of arbitrary syllables at all.

We came out and blended with the panaroma once more. It was all so entirely French, I said; no suggestion of America anywhere. But Narcissa, aged fifteen, just then pointed to a flaming handbill over the entrance of a cinematograph show. The poster was foreign, too, in its phrasing, but the title, "*L'aventures d'Arizona Bill*," certainly had a flavor of home.

The Joy, who was ten, was for going in and putting other things by, but we overruled her. Other signs attracted us—the window cards and announcements were easy lessons in French and always interesting.

By and by bouquets of lights breaking out along the streets reminded us that it was evening and that we were hungry. There were plenty of hotels, including our own, but the dining rooms looked big and warm and expensive and we were dusty and economical and already warm enough. We would stop at some open-air place, we said, and have something dainty and modest and not heating to the blood. We thought it would be easy to find such a place, for there were perfect seas of sidewalk tables, thronged with people, who at first glance seemed to be dining. But we discovered that they were only drinking, as before, and perhaps nibbling at little cakes or rolls. When we made timid and rudimentary inquiries of the busy waiters, they pointed toward the hotels or explained things in words so glued together we could not sort them out. How different it all was from New York, we said. Narcissa openly sighed to be back on "old rue de Broadway," where there were restaurants big and little every twenty steps.

We wandered into side streets and by and by found an open place with a tiny green inclosure, where a few people certainly seemed to be eating. We were not entirely satisfied with the look of the patrons, but they were orderly, and some of them of good appearance. The little tables had neat white cloths on them, and the glassware shone brightly in the electric glow. So we took a corner position and studied the rather

elaborate and obscure bill of fare. It was written, and the few things we could decipher did not seem cheap. We had heard about food being reasonable in France, but single portions of fish or cutlets at ".45" and broiled chicken at "1.20" could hardly be called cheap in this retired and unpretentious corner. One might as well be in a better place—in New York. We wondered how these unfashionable people about us could look so contented and afford to order such liberal supplies. Then suddenly a great light came. The price amounts were not in dollars and cents, but in francs and centimes. The decimals were the same, only you divided by five to get American values. There is ever so much difference.[1]

The bill of fare suddenly took on a halo. It became almost unbelievable. We were tempted to go—it was too cheap to be decent. But we were weary and hungry, and we stayed. Later we were glad. We had those things which the French make so well, no matter how humble the place—"*pot au feu, bouillabaisse*" (the fish soup which is the pride of Marseilles—our first introduction to it), lamb chops, a crisp salad, Gruyère cheese, with a pint of red wine; and we paid —I try to blush when I tell it—a total for our four of less than five francs—that is to say, something under a dollar, including the tip, which was certainly large enough, if one could judge from the lavish acknowledgment of the busy person who served us.

We lingered while I smoked, observing some curious things. The place filled up with a democratic crowd, including, as it did, what were evidently well-to-do

[1] The old rates of exchange are used in this book.

tradesmen and their families, clerks with their young wives or sweethearts, single derelicts of both sexes, soldiers, even workmen in blouses. Many of them seemed to be regular customers, for they greeted the waiters and chatted with them during the serving. Then we discovered a peculiar proof that these were in fact steady patrons. In the inner restaurant were rows of hooks along the walls, and at the corners some racks with other hooks. Upon these were hanging, not hats or garments, but dozens of knotted white cloths which we discovered presently to be table napkins, large white *serviettes* like our own. While we were trying to make out why they should be variously knotted and hung about in that way a man and woman went in and, after a brief survey of the hooks, took down two of the napkins and carried them to a table. We understood then. The bill of fare stated that napkins were charged for at the rate of five centimes (one cent) each. These were individual leaseholdings, as it were, of those who came regularly —a fine example of French economy. We did not hang up our napkins when we went away. We might not come back, and, besides, there were no empty hooks.

Chapter II

MOTORING BY TRAM

A LITTLE book says: "Thanks to a unique system of tramways, Marseilles may be visited rapidly and without fatigue." They do not know the word "trolley" in Europe, and "tramway" is not a French word, but the French have adopted it, even with its "w," a letter not in their alphabet. The Marseilles trams did seem to run everywhere, and they were cheap. Ten centimes (two cents) was the fare for each "zone" or division, and a division long enough for the average passenger. Being sight-seers, we generally paid more than once, but even so the aggregate was modest enough. The circular trip around the Corniche, or shore, road has four of these divisions, with a special rate for the trip, which is very long and very beautiful.

We took the Corniche trip toward evening for the sake of the sunset. The tram starts at the rue de Rome and winds through the city first, across shaded courts, along streets of varying widths (some of them so old and ever so foreign, but always clean), past beautiful public buildings always with deep open spaces or broad streets in front of them, for the French do not hide their fine public architectures and monuments, but plant them as a landscape gardener plants

his trellises and trees. Then all at once we were at the shore—the Mediterranean no longer blue, but crimson and gold with evening, the sun still drifting, as it seemed, among the harbor islands—the towers of Château d'If outlined on the sky. On one side the sea, breaking against the rocks and beaches, washing into little sheltered bays—on the other the abrupt or terraced cliff, with fair villas set in gardens of palm and mimosa and the rose trees of the south. Here and there among the villas were palace-like hotels, with wide balconies that overlooked the sea, and down along the shore were tea houses and restaurants where one could sit at little tables on pretty terraces just above the water's edge.

So we left the tram at the end of a zone and made our way down to one of those places, and sat in a little garden and had fish, freshly caught, and a cutlet, and some ripe grapes, and such things; and we watched the sun set, and stayed until the dark came and the Corniche shore turned into a necklace of twinkling lights. Then the tram carried us still farther, and back into the city at last, by way of the Prado, a broad residential avenue, with trees rising dark on either side.

At the end of a week in Marseilles we had learned a number of things—made some observations—drawn some conclusions. It is a very old city—old when the Greeks settled there twenty-five hundred years ago—but it has been ravaged and rebuilt too often through the ages for any of its original antiquity to remain. Some of the buildings have stood five or six hundred years, perhaps, and are quaint and inter-

esting, with their queer roofs and moldering walls which have known siege and battle and have seen men in gaudy trappings and armor go clanking by, stopping to let their horses drink at the scarred fountains where to-day women wash their vegetables and their clothing. We were glad to have looked on those ancient relics, for they, too, would soon be gone. The spirit of great building and progress is abroad in Marseilles—the old clusters of houses will come down—the hoary fountains worn smooth by the hands of women and the noses of thirsty beasts will be replaced by new ones—fine and beautiful, for the French build always for art, let the race for commercial supremacy be ever so swift. Fifty or one hundred years from now it will be as hard to find one of these landmarks as it is to-day relics of the Greek and Roman times, and of the latter we found none at all. Tradition has it that Lazarus and his family came to Marseilles after his resuscitation, but the house he occupied is not shown. Indeed, there is probably not a thing above ground that Lucian the Greek saw when he lived here in the second century.

The harbor he sailed into remains. Its borders have changed, but it is the same inclosed port that sheltered those early galleys and triremes of commerce and of war. We looked down upon it from our balcony, and sometimes in the dim morning, or in the first dusk of evening when its sails were idle and its docks deserted, it seemed still to have something of the past about it, something that was not quite reality. Certain of its craft were old in fashion and quaint in form, and if even one trireme had lain

at anchor there, or had come drifting in, we might easily have fancied this to be the port that somewhere is said to harbor the missing ships.

It is a busy place by day. Its quays are full of trucks and trams and teams, and a great traffic going on. Lucian would hardly recognize any of it at all. The noise would appall him, the smoking steamers would terrify him, the *transbordeur*—an aërial bridge suspended between two Eiffel towers, with a hanging car that travels back and forth like a cash railway—would set him praying to the gods. Possibly the fishwives, sorting out sea food and bait under little awnings, might strike him as more or less familiar. At least he would recognize their occupation. They were strung along the east quay, and I had never dreamed that the sea contained so many strange things to eat as they carried in stock. They had oysters and clams, and several varieties of mussels, and some things that looked like tide-worn lumps of terra cotta, and other things that resembled nothing else under heaven, so that words have not been invented to describe them.

Then they had *oursins*. I don't know whether an *oursin* is a bivalve or not. It does not look like one. The word "*oursin*" means hedgehog, but this *oursin* looked a great deal more like an old, black, sea-soaked chestnut bur—that is, before they opened it. When the *oursin* is split open—

But I cannot describe an opened *oursin* and preserve the proprieties. It is too—physiological. And the Marseillais eat those things—eat them raw! Narcissa and I, who had rather more limb and wind

than the others, wandered along the quay a good deal, and often stood spellbound watching this performance. Once we saw two women having some of them for early breakfast with a bottle of wine—fancy!

By the way, we finally discovered the restaurants in Marseilles. At first we thought that the Marseillais never ate in public, but only drank. This was premature. There are restaurant districts. The rue Colbert is one of them. The quay is another, and of the restaurants in that precinct there is one that no traveler should miss. It is Pascal's, established a hundred years ago, and descended from father to son to the present moment. Pascal's is famous for its fish, and especially for its *bouillabaisse*. If I were to be in Marseilles only a brief time, I might be willing to miss the Palais Longchamps or a cathedral or two, but not Pascal's and *bouillabaisse*. It is a glorified fish chowder. I will say no more than that, for I should only dull its bloom. I started to write a poem on it. It began:

Oh, bouillabaisse, I sing thy praise.

But Narcissa said that the rhyme was bad, and I gave it up. Besides, I remembered that Thackeray had written a poem on the same subject.

One must go early to get a seat at Pascal's. There are rooms and rooms, and waiters hurrying about, and you must give your order, or point at the bill of fare, without much delay. Sea food is the thing, and it comes hot and delicious, and at the end you can have melon—from paradise, I suppose, for it is pure nectar—a kind of liquid cantaloupe such as I

have seen nowhere else in this world.[1] You have wine if you want it, at a franc a bottle, and when you are through you have spent about half a dollar for everything and feel that life is a song and the future made of peace. There came moments after we found Pascal's when, like the lotus eaters, we felt moved to say: "We will roam no more. This at last is the port where dreams come true."

Our motor clearance required a full ten days, but we did not regret the time. We made some further trips by tram, and one by water—to Château d'If, on the little ferry that runs every hour or so to that historic island fortress. To many persons Château d'If is a semi-mythical island prison from which, in Dumas' novel, Edmond Dantes escapes to become the Count of Monte Cristo, with fabulous wealth and an avenging sword. But it is real enough; a prison fortress which crowns a barren rock, twenty minutes from the harbor entrance, in plain view from the Corniche road. François I laid its corner stone in 1524 and construction continued during the next seventy years. It is a place of grim, stubby towers, with an inner court opening to the cells—two ranges of them, one above the other. The furniture of the court is a stone stairway and a well.

Château d'If is about as solid and enduring as the rock it stands on, and it is not the kind of place one would expect to go away from alive, if he were invited there for permanent residence. There appears to be no record of any escapes except that of Edmond Dantes, which is in a novel. When prisoners left

[1] Our honey-dew melon is a mild approach to it.

that island it was by consent of the authorities. I am not saying that Dumas invented his story. In fact, I insist on believing it. I am only saying that it was a remarkable exception to the general habit of the guests in Château d'If. Of course it happened, for we saw cell B where Dantes was confined, a rayless place; also cell A adjoining, where the Abbé Faria was, and even the hole between, through which the Abbé counseled Dantes and confided the secret of the treasure that would make Dantes the master of the world. All of the cells have tablets at their entrances bearing the names of their most notable occupants, and that of Edmond Dantes is prominently displayed. It was good enough evidence for us.

Those cells are on the lower level, and are merely black, damp holes, without windows, and with no floors except the unleveled surface of the rock. Prisoners were expected to die there and they generally did it with little delay. One Bernadot, a rich Marseilles merchant, starved himself, and so found release at the end of the twelfth day; but another, a sailor named Jean Paul, survived in that horrible darkness for thirty-one years. His crime was striking his commander. Many of the offenses were even more trifling; the mere utterance of a word offensive to some one in power was enough to secure lodging in Château d'If. It was even dangerous to have a pretty daughter or wife that a person of influence coveted. Château d'If had an open door for husbands and fathers not inclined to be reasonable in such matters.

The second-story prisons are larger and lighter, but hardly less interesting. In No. 5 Count Mirabeau lodged for nearly a year, by suggestion of his father, who did not approve of his son's wild ways and thought Château d'If would tame him. But Mirabeau put in his time writing an essay on despotism and planning revolution. Later, one of the neighboring apartments, No. 7, a large one, became the seat of the *tribunal révolutionnaire* which condemned there sixty-six to the guillotine.

Many notables were sent to Château d'If on the charge of disloyalty to the sovereign. In one of the larger cells two brothers were imprisoned for having shared the exile of one Chevalier Glendèves who was obliged to flee from France because he refused to go down on his knees to Louis XIV. Royalty itself has enjoyed the hospitality of Château d'If. Louis Philippe of Orléans occupied the same large apartment later, which is really quite a grand one for a prison, with a fireplace and space to move about. Another commodious room on this floor was for a time the home of the mysterious Man of the Iron Mask.

These are but a few—one can only touch on the more interesting names. "Dead after ten years of captivity"; "Dead after sixteen years of captivity"; such memoranda close many of the records. Some of the prisoners were released at last, racked with disease and enfeebled in mind. Some went forth to the block, perhaps willingly enough. It is not a place in which one wishes to linger. You walk a little way into the blackest of the dungeons, stum-

bling over the rocks of the damp, unleveled floor, and hurry out. You hesitate a moment in the larger, lighter cells and try to picture a king there, and the Iron Mask; you try to imagine the weird figure of Mirabeau raging and writing, and then, a step away, the grim tribunal sorting from the nobility of France material for the guillotine. It is the kind of thing you cannot make seem real. You can see a picture, but it is always away somewhere—never quite there, in the very place.

Outside it was sunny, the sea blue, the cliffs high and sharp, with water always breaking and foaming at their feet. The Joy insisted on being shown the exact place where Dantes was flung over, but I was afraid to try to find it. I was afraid that there would be no place where he could be flung into the water without hitting the sharp rocks below, and that would end the story before he got the treasure. I said it was probably on the other side of the island, and besides it was getting late. We sailed home in the evening light, this time into the ancient harbor, and landed about where Lucian used to land, I should think, such a long time ago.

It was our last night in Marseilles. We had been there a full ten days, altogether, and time had not hung upon our hands. We would still have lingered, but there was no longer an excuse. Even the car could not furnish one. Released from its prison, refreshed with a few liters of gasoline—*essence*, they call it—and awakened with a gentle hitch or two of the crank, it began its sweet old murmur, just as if it had not been across some thousands of miles of toss-

ing water. Then, the clutch released, it slipped noiselessly out of the docks, through the narrow streets, to a garage, where it acquired its new numbers and a bath, and maybe a French lesson or two, so that to-morrow it might carry us farther into France.

Chapter III

ACROSS THE CRAU

THERE are at least two ways to leave Marseilles for the open plain of the Provence, and we had hardly started before I wished I had chosen the other one. We were climbing the rue de la République, or one of its connections, when we met, coming down on the wrong side of the tram line, one of the heaviest vehicles in France, loaded with iron castings. It was a fairly crowded street, too, and I hesitated a moment too long in deciding to switch to the wrong side, myself, and so sneak around the obstruction. In that moment the monstrous thing decided to cross to its own side of the road, which seemed to solve the problem. I brought the car to a standstill to wait.

But that was another mistake; I should have backed. The obstruction refused to cross the tram track. Evidently the rails were slippery and when the enormous wheels met the iron they slipped—slipped toward us—ponderously, slowly, as inevitable as doomsday. I was willing to back then, but when I shifted the lever I forgot something else and our engine stopped. There was not enough gravity to carry us back without it; neither was there room, or time, to crank.[1] So there we were,

[1] The reader is reminded that this was in a day when few cars cranked otherwise than by hand.

with that mountain closing in upon us like a wall of Poe's collapsing room.

It was fascinating. I don't think one of us thought of jumping out and leaving the car to its fate. The truck driver was frantically urging his team forward, hoping the wheels would catch, but only making them slide a little quicker in our direction. They were six inches away, now—five inches—three inches—one inch—the end of the hub was touching our mud guard. What we *might* have done then—what *might* have happened remains guesswork. What did happen was that the huge steel tire reached a joint in the tram rail and unhurriedly lifted itself over, just as if that was what it had been intending to do all the time. I had strength enough left to get out and crank up, then, but none to spare. A little more paint off the front end of the mud guard, but that was nothing. I had whetted those guards on a variety of things, including a cow, in my time. At home I had a real passion for scraping them against the door casing of the garage, backing out.

Still, we were pretty thoughtful for several miles and missed a road that turns off to Arles, and were on the way to Aix, which we had already visited by tram. Never mind; Aix was on the way to Arles, too, and when all the roads are good roads a few miles of motor travel more or less do not count. Only it is such a dusty way to Aix, and we were anxious to get into the cleaner and more inviting byways.

We were at the outskirts, presently, and when we saw a military-looking gentleman standing before a little house marked "*L'Octroi*" we stopped. I had

learned enough French to know that *l'octroi* means a local custom house, and it is not considered good form to pass one of them unnoticed. It hurts the *l'octroi* man's feelings and he is backed by the *gendarmerie* of France. He will let you pass, and then in his sorrow he will telephone to the police station, just ahead. There you will be stopped with a bayonet, or a club, or something, and brought back to the *l'octroi*, where you will pay an *amend* of six francs; also costs; also for the revenue stamp attached to your bill of particulars; also for any little thing which you may happen to have upon which duty may be levied; also for other things; and you will stand facing a half-open cell at the end of the corridor while your account is being made up—all of which things happened to a friend of mine who thought that because an *octroi* man looked sleepy he was partly dead. Being warned in this way, we said we would stop for an *octroi* man even if he were entirely dead; so we pulled up and nodded politely, and smiled, and said, "Bon joor, messoor," and waited his pleasure.

You never saw a politer man. He made a sweeping salute and said—well, it doesn't matter just what he said—I took it to be complimentary and Narcissa thought it was something about vegetables. Whatever it was, we all smiled again, while he merely glanced in the car fore and aft, gave another fine salute and said, "*Allay*," whereupon we understood, and *allayed*, with counter-salutes and further smiles—all of which seemed pleasanter than to be brought back by a *gendarme* and stood up in front of a cell during the reckoning process.

Inquiring in Aix for the road to Arles we made a discovery, to wit: they do not always pronounce it "Arl" in the French way, but "Arlah," which is Provençal, I suppose, the remains of the old name "Arlate." One young man did not seem even to recognize the name Arles, though curiously it happened that he spoke English—enough, at least, to direct us when he found that it was his Provençal "Arlah" that we wanted.

So we left Aix behind us, and with it the dust, the trams, and about the last traces of those modern innovations which make life so comfortable when you need them and so unpeaceful when you prefer something else. The one great modern innovation which bore us silently along those level roads fell into the cosmic rhythm without a jar—becoming, as it seemed, a sort of superhuman activity, such as we shall know, perhaps, when we get our lost wings again.

I don't know whether Provence roads are modern or not. I suspect they were begun by the Roman armies a good while ago; but in any case they are not neglected now. They are boulevards—no, not exactly that, for the word "boulevard" suggests great width. They are avenues, then, ample as to width, and smooth and hard, and planted on both sides with exactly spaced and carefully kept trees. Leaving Aix, we entered one of these highways running straight into the open country. Naturally we did not expect it to continue far, not in that perfectly ordered fashion, but when with mile after mile it varied only to become more beautiful, we were filled

with wonder. The country was not thickly settled; the road was sparsely traveled. Now and then we passed a heavy team drawing a load of hay or grain or wine barrels, and occasionally, very occasionally, we saw an automobile.

It was a fair, fertile land at first. There were rich, sloping fields, vineyards, olive gardens, and plumy poplars; also, an occasional stone farmhouse that looked ancient and mossy and picturesque, and made us wish we could know something of the life inside its heavy walls. We said that sometime we would stop at such a place and ask them to take us in for the night.

Now and then we passed through a village, where the streets became narrow and winding, and were not specially clean. They were interesting places enough, for they were old and queer, but they did not invite us to linger. They were neither older nor more queer than corners of Marseilles we had seen. Once we saw a kind of fair going on and the people in holiday dress.

At Salon, a still larger and cleaner place, we stopped to buy something for our wayside luncheon. Near the corner of a little shaded square a man was selling those delectable melons such as we had eaten in Marseilles; at a shop across the way was a window full of attractions—little cheeses, preserved meats, and the like. I gathered up an assortment, then went into a *boulangerie* for bread. There was another customer ahead of me, and I learned something, watching his transaction. Bread, it seemed, was not sold by the loaf there, but by exact weight. The

man said some words and the woman who waited on him laid two loaves, each about a yard long, on the scales. Evidently they exceeded his order, for she cut off a foot or so from one loaf. Still the weight was too much, and she cut off a slice. He took what was left, laid down his money, and walked out. I had a feeling that the end and slice would lie around and get shopworn if I did not take them. I pointed at them, and she put them on the scales. Then I laid down a franc, and she gave me half a gill of copper change. It made the family envious when they saw how exactly I had transacted my purchase. There is nothing like knowing the language. We pushed on into the country again, stopped in a shady, green place, and picnicked on those good things for which we had spent nearly four francs. There were some things left over, too; we could have done without the extra slice of bread.

There were always mountains in view, but where we were the land had become a level plain, once, ages ago, washed by the sea. We realized this when the fertile expanse became, little by little, a barren—a mere waste, at length, of flat smooth stones like cobble, a floor left by the departing tides. "La Crau" it is called, and here there were no homes. No harvest could grow in that land—nothing but a little tough grass, and the artificially set trees on either side of the perfectly smooth, perfectly straight road that kept on and on, mile after mile, until it seemed that it must be a band around the world. How can they afford to maintain such a road through that sterile land?

The sun was dropping to the western horizon, but we did not hurry. I set the throttle to a point where the speedometer registered fifteen miles an hour. So level was the road that the figures on the dial seemed fixed there. There was nothing to see but the unbroken barren, the perfectly regular rows of sycamore or cypress, and the evening sky; yet I have seldom known a drive more inspiring. Steadily, unvaryingly, and silently heading straight into the sunset, we seemed somehow a part of the planetary system, little brother to the stars.

It was dusk when we reached the outskirts of Arles and stopped to light the lamps. The wide street led us into the business region, and we hoped it might carry us to the hotels. But this was too much to expect in an old French, Provençal, Roman city. Pausing, we pronounced the word "hotel," and were directed toward narrower and darker ways. We had entered one of these when a man stepped out of the shadow and took charge of us. I concluded that we were arrested then, and probably would not need a hotel. But he also said "hotel," and, stepping on the running-board, pointed, while I steered, under his direction. I have no idea as to the way we went, but we came out into a semi-lighted square directly in front of a most friendly-looking hostelry. Then I went in and aired some of my phonograph French, inquiring about rooms on the different *étages* and the cost of *dîners* and *déjeuners*, and the landlady spoke so slowly and distinctly that it made one vain of his understanding.

So we unloaded, and our guide, who seemed to be

an *attaché* of the place, directed me to the garage. I gathered from some of the sounds he made that the main garage was *complet*—that is to say, full—and we were going to an annex. It was an interesting excursion, but I should have preferred to make it on foot and by daylight. We crossed the square and entered a cobbled street—no, a passage—between ancient walls, lost in the blackness above, and so close together below that I hesitated. It was a place for armored men on horseback, not for automobiles. We crept slowly through and then we came to an uphill corner that I was sure no car without a hinge in the middle could turn. But my guard—guide, I mean, signified that it could be done, and inch by inch we crawled through. The annex—it was really a stable of the Middle Ages—was at the end of the tunnel, and when we came away and left the car there I was persuaded that I should never see it again.

Back at the hotel, however, it was cheerful enough. It seemed an ancient place of stone stairways and thick walls. Here and there in niches were Roman vases and fragments found during the excavations. Somewhere underneath us were said to be catacombs. Attractive things, all of them, but the dinner we had —hot, fine and French, with *vin compris* two colors —was even more attractive to travelers who had been drinking in oxygen under the wide sky all those steady miles across the Crau.

Chapter IV

MISTRAL

(From my notes, September 10, 1913)

ADJOINING our hotel—almost a part of it, in fact, is a remnant of the ancient Roman forum of Arles. Some columns, a piece of the heavy wall, sections of lintel, pediment, and cornice still stand. It is a portion of the Corinthian entrance to what was the superb assembly place of Roman Arles. The square is called Place du Forum, and sometimes now Place Mistral—the latter name because a bronze statue of the "Homer of the Provence" has been erected there, just across from the forum entrance.

Frédéric Mistral, still alive at eighty-three, is the light of the modern Provence.[1] We had begun to realize something of this when we saw his photographs and various editions of his poems in the windows of Marseilles and Aix, and handbills announcing the celebration at St. Remy of the fiftieth anniversary of Gounod's score of Mistral's great poem, "Mireille." But we did not at all realize the fullness of the Provençal reverence for "the Master," as they call him, until we reached Arles. To the Provence Mistral is a god—an Apollo—the "central sun from which other Provençal singers are as diverging rays."

[1] Written in 1913. Mistral died March 24th of the following year.

Whatever Mistral touches is glorified. Provençal women talk with a new grace because Mistral has sung of them. Green slopes and mossy ruins are viewed through the light of Mistral's song. A Mistral anniversary is celebrated like a Declaration of Independence or a Louisiana Purchase. They have even named a wind after him. Or perhaps he was named after the wind. Whichever way it was, the wind has taken second place and the people smile tenderly now, remembering the Master, when its name is mentioned.

I believe Mistral does not sing in these later days. He does not need to. The songs he sang in youth go on singing for him, and are always young. Outside of France they are not widely known; their bloom and fragrance shrink under translation. George Meredith, writing to Janet Ross in 1861, said: "Mistral I have read. He is really a fine poet." But to Meredith the euphonies of France were not strange.

And Mistral has loved the Provence. Not only has he sung of it, but he has given his labor and substance to preserve its memories. When the Academy voted him an award of three thousand francs he devoted it to the needs of his fellow poets;[1] when he was awarded the Nobel prize he forgot that he might spend it on himself, and bought and restored an old palace, and converted it into a museum for Arles.

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[1] Daudet in his *Lettres de Mon Moulin* says:

"*Il y à quatre ans, lorsque l'Académie donna à l'auteur de 'Mireille' le prix de trois mille francs. Mme. Mistral [sa mère] eut une idée.*

"'*Si nous faisons tapisser et plafonner ta chambre?' dit elle à son fils.*

"'*Non! non!' répondit Mistral. 'Ça ç'est l'argent des poëtes, on n'y touche pas.'*"

Then he devoted his time and energies to collecting Provençal relics, and to-day, with its treasures and associations, the place has become a shrine. Everything relating to the life and traditions of the Provence is there—Roman sculpture, sarcophagi, ceramics, frescoes, furnishings, implements—the place is crowded with precious things. Lately a room of honor has been devoted to the poet himself. In it are cases filled with his personal treasures; the walls are hung with illustrations used in his books. On the mantel is a fine bust of the poet, and in a handsome reliquary one finds a lock of hair, a little dress, and the cradle of the infant Mistral. In the cradle lies the manuscript of Mistral's first and greatest work, the "Mireille." The Provence has produced other noted men—among them Alphonse Daudet, who was born just over at Nîmes, and celebrated the town of Tarascon with his Tartarin. But Daudet went to Paris, which is, perhaps, a sin. The Provence is proud of Daudet, and he, too, has a statue, at Nîmes; but the Provence worships Mistral.

Chapter V

THE ROME OF FRANCE

THERE is no record of a time when there was not a city at Arles. The Rhone divides to form its delta there—loses its swiftness and becomes a smooth highway to the sea.

"As at Arles, where the Rhone stagnates," wrote Dante, who probably visited the place on a journey he made to Paris. There the flat barrenness of the Crau becomes fertile slopes and watered fields. It is a place for men to congregate and it was already important when Julius Cæsar established a Roman colony and built a fleet there, after which it became still more important—finally, with its one hundred thousand inhabitants, rivaling even Marseilles. It was during those earlier years—along through the first and second centuries—that most of the great building was done, remnants of which survive to this day. Prosperity continued even into the fourth century, when the Christian Emperor Constantine established a noble palace there and contemplated making it the capital of his kingdom.

But then the decline set in. In the next century or two clouds of so-called barbarians swept down from the north and east, conquering, plundering, and establishing new kingdoms. Gauls, Goths, Saracens, and Francs each had their turn at it.

Following came the parlous years of the middle period. For a brief time it was an independent republic; then a monarchy. By the end of the fifteenth century it was ready to be annexed to France. Always a battle ground, raided and sacked so often that the count is lost, the wonder is that any of its ancient glories survive at all. But the Romans built well; their massive construction has withstood the wild ravage of succeeding wars, the sun and storm of millennial years.

We knew little of Arles except that it was the place where there was the ruin of a Roman arena, and we expected not much from that. The Romans had occupied France and had doubtless built amusement places, but if we gave the matter any further thought it was to conclude that such provincial circus rings would be small affairs of which only a few vestiges, like those of the ruined Forum, would remain. We would visit the fragments, of course, and meantime we drifted along one side of the Place du Forum in the morning sunlight, looking in show windows to find something in picture postals to send home.

What we saw at first puzzled, then astonished us. Besides the pictures of Mistral the cards were mostly of ruins—which we expected, perhaps, but not of such ruins. Why, these were not mere vestiges. Ephesus, Baalbec, Rome itself, could hardly show more impressive remains. The arena on these cards seemed hardly a ruin at all, and here were other cards which showed it occupied, filled with a vast modern audience who were watching something—clearly a bull fight, a legitimate descendant of Nero's Rome.

I could not at first believe that these structures could be of Arles, but the inscriptions were not to be disputed. Then I could not wait to get to them.

We did not drive. It was only a little way to the arena, they told us, and the narrow streets looked crooked and congested. It was a hot September morning, but I think we hurried. I suppose I was afraid the arena would not wait. Then all at once we were right upon it, had entered a lofty arch, climbed some stairs, and were gazing down on one of the surviving glories of a dead empire.

What a structure it is! An oval 448 by 352 feet —more than half as big again as a city block; the inner oval, the arena itself,[1] 226 by 129 feet, the tiers of stone seats rising terrace above terrace to a high circle of arches which once formed the support for an enormous canvas dome.

All along the terraces arches and stairways lead down to spacious recesses and the great entrance corridor. The twenty thousand spectators which this arena once held were not obliged to crowd through any one or two entrances, but could enter almost anywhere and ascend to their seats from any point of the compass. They held tickets—pieces of parchment, I suppose—and these were numbered like the seats, just as tickets are numbered to-day.

Down near the ringside was the pit, or *podium*, and that was the choice place. Some of the seats there were owned, and bore the owners' names. The upper seats are wide stone steps, but comfortable

[1] The word "arena" derives its name from the sand, strewn to absorb the blood.

enough, and solid enough to stand till judgment day. They have ranged wooden benches along some of them now, I do not see why, for they are very ugly and certainly not luxurious. They are for the entertainments—mainly bull fights—of the present; for strange, almost unbelievable as it seems, the old arena has become no mere landmark, a tradition, a monument of barbaric tastes and morals, but continues in active service to-day, its purpose the same, its morals not largely improved.

It was built about the end of the first century, and in the beginning stags and wild boars were chased and put to death there. But then Roman taste improved. These were tame affairs, after all. So the arena became a prize ring in which the combatants handled one another without gloves—that is to say, with short swords—and were hacked into a mince instead of mauled into a pulp in our more refined modern way. To vary the games lions and tigers were imported and matched against the gladiators, with pleasing effect. Public taste went on improving and demanding fresh novelties. Rome was engaged just then in exterminating Christians, and the happy thought occurred to make spectacles of them by having them fight the gladiators and the wild beasts, thus combining business and pleasure in a manner which would seem to have been highly satisfactory to the public who thronged the seats and applauded and laughed, and had refreshments served, and said what a great thing Christianity was and how they hoped its converts would increase. Sometimes, when the captures were numer-

ous and the managers could afford it, Christians on crosses were planted around the entire arena, covered with straw and pitch and converted into torches. These were night exhibitions, when the torches would be more showy; and the canvas dome was taken away so that the smoke and shrieks could go climbing to the stars. Attractions like that would always jam an amphitheater. This one at Arles has held twenty-five thousand on one of those special occasions. Centuries later, when the Christians themselves came into power, they showed a spirit of liberality which shines by contrast. They burned their heretics in the public squares, free.

Only bulls and worn-out, cheap horses are tortured here to-day. It seems a pretty tame sport after those great circuses of the past. But art is long and taste is fleeting. Art will keep up with taste, and all that we know of the latter is that it will change. Because to-day we are satisfied with prize fights and bull fights is no sign that those who follow us will not demand sword fights and wild beasts and living torches. These old benches will last through the ages. They have always been familiar with the sport of torture of one sort or another. They await quite serenely for what the centuries may bring.

It was hard to leave the arena. One would like to remain and review its long story. What did the barbarians do there—those hordes that swarmed in and trampled Rome? The Saracens in the eighth century used it for a fortress and added four watch towers, but their masonry is not of the everlasting Roman kind, and one of their towers has tumbled

down. It would be no harm if the others would tumble, too. They lend to the place that romance which always goes with the name "Saracen," but they add no beauty.

We paid a franc admission when we came into the amphitheater, our tickets being coupon affairs, admitting us to a variety of other historic places. The proceeds from the ruins are devoted to their care and preservation, but they cannot go far. Very likely the bull-fight money is also used. That would be consistent.

We were directed to the Roman Theater, near at hand, where the ruin is ruin indeed. A flight of rising stone seats, two graceful Corinthian columns still standing, the rest fragments. More graceful in its architecture than the arena, the theater yielded more readily to the vandalisms of the conquerors and the corrosions of time. As early as the third century it was partially pulled down. Later it was restored, but not for long. The building bishops came and wanted its materials and ornaments for their churches. Not much was left after that, but to-day the fragments remaining have been unearthed and set up and give at least a hint of its former glory. One wonders if those audiences who watched Christian slaughter at the arena came also to this chaste spot. Plays are sometimes given here to-day, I am told, classic reproductions, but it is hard to believe that they would blend with this desolated setting. The bull fight in the arena is even better.

We went over to the church of St. Trophime, which is not a ruin, though very old. St. Trophime, a

companion of St. Paul, was the founder of the church of Arles. He is said to have set up a memorial to St. Étienne, the first martyr, and on this consecrated spot three churches have been built, one in the fourth century, another in the seventh, and this one, dedicated to St. Trophime, in the twelfth, or earlier. It is of supreme historical importance. By the faithful it is believed to contain the remains of St. Trophime himself. Barbarossa and other great kings were crowned here; every important ceremony of mediæval Arles has been held here.

It is one of the oldest-looking places I ever saw—so moldy, so crumbly, and so dim. Though a thousand years older, the arena looks fresh as compared with it, because even sun and storm do not gnaw and corrode like gloom and dampness. But perhaps this is a softer stone. The cloister gallery, which was not built until the twelfth century, is so permeated with decay that one almost fears to touch its delicately carved ornamentations lest they crumble in his hands. Mistral has celebrated the cloister portal in a poem, and that alone would make it sacred to the Provence. The beautiful gallery is built around a court and it is lined with sculpture and bas-relief, rich beyond words. Saints and bible scenes are the subjects, and how old, how time-eaten and sorrowful they look. One gets the idea that the saints and martyrs and prophets have all contracted some wasting malady which they cannot long survive now. But one must not be flippant. It is a place where the feet of faith went softly down the centuries; and, taken as a whole, St. Trophime, with

its graceful architecture—Gothic and Byzantine, combined with the Roman fragments brought long ago from the despoiled theater—is beautiful and delicate and tender, and there hangs about it the atmosphere that comes of long centuries of quiet and sacred things.

Mistral's museum is just across from the church, but I have already spoken of that—briefly, when it is worth a volume. One should be in a patient mood for museums—either to see or to write of them—a mood that somehow does not go with automobile wandering, however deliberate. But I must give a word at least to two other such institutions of Arles, the Musée Lapidaire, a magnificent collection of pagan and early Christian sarcophagi and marble, mostly from the ancient burial field, the Aliscamp—and the Musée Réattu.

Réattu was an Arlesian painter of note who produced many pictures and collected many beautiful things. His collections have been acquired by the city of Arles, and installed in one of its most picturesque old buildings—the ancient Grand Priory of the Knights of Malta. The stairway is hung with tapestries and priceless arras; the rooms are filled with paintings, bas-reliefs, medallions, marbles, armor, —a wealth of art objects. One finds it hard to believe that such museums can be owned and supported by this little city—ancient, half forgotten, stranded here on the banks of the Rhone. Its population is given as thirty thousand, and it makes sausages—very good ones—and there are some railway shops that employ as many as fifteen hundred men. Some boat

building may still be done here, too. But this is about all Arles can claim in the way of industries. It has not the look of what we call to-day a thriving city. It seems, rather, a mediæval setting for the more ancient memories. Yet it has these three splendid museums, and it has preserved and restored its ruins, just as if it had a J. Pierpont Morgan behind it, instead of an old poet with a Nobel prize, and a determined little community, too proud of its traditions and its taste to let them die. Danbury, Connecticut, has as many inhabitants as Arles, and it makes about all the hats that are worn in America. It is a busy, rich place, where nearly everybody owns an automobile, if one may judge by the street exhibit any pleasant afternoon. It is an old place, too, for America, with plenty of landmarks and traditions. But I somehow can't imagine Danbury spending the money and the time to establish such superb institutions as these, or to preserve its prerevolutionary houses. But, after all, Danbury is young. It will preserve something two thousand years hence—probably those latest Greco-Roman façades which it is building now.

Near to the Réattu Museum is the palace of the Christian Emperor Constantine. Constantine came here after his father died, and fell in love with the beauty and retirement of the place. Here, on the banks of the Rhone, he built a palace, and dreamed of passing his days in it—of making Arles the capital of his empire. His mother, St. Helene, whose dreams at Jerusalem located the Holy Sepulcher, the True Cross, and other needed relics, came to visit her

son, and while here witnessed the treason and suicide of one Maximus Hercules, persecutor of the Christians. That was early in the fourth century. The daughter of Maximus seems to have been converted, for she came to stay at the palace and in due time bore Constantine a son. Descendants of Constantine occupied the palace for a period, then it passed to the Gauls, to the Goths, and so down the invading and conquering line. Once a king, Euric III, was assassinated here. Other kings followed and several varieties of counts. Their reigns were usually short and likely to end with a good deal of suddenness. It was always a good place for royalty to live and die. Until the beginning of the nineteenth century it was known as the "House of the King," but it was a ruin by that time. Only portions of it remain now, chiefly a sort of rotunda of the grand hall of state. Very little is left to show the ancient richness of its walls, but one may invite himself to imagine something—its marbles and its hangings—also that it was just here that M. Hercules and King Euric and their kind went the violent way; it would be the dramatic place for those occasions.

One may not know to-day just what space the palace originally covered, but it was very large. Portions of its walls appear in adjoining buildings. Excavations have brought to light marbles, baths, rich ornamentations, all attesting its former grandeur. Arles preserves it for its memories, and in pride of the time when she came so near to being the capital of the world.

Chapter VI

THE WAY THROUGH EDEN

THERE is so much to see at Arles. One would like to linger a week, then a month, then very likely he would not care to go at all. The past would get hold of him by that time—the glamour that hangs about the dead centuries.

There had been rain in the night when we left Arles, much needed, for it was the season of drought. It was mid-morning and the roads were hard and perfect, and led us along sparkling waysides and between refreshed vineyards, and gardens, and olive groves. It seemed a good deal like traveling through Eden, and I don't suppose heaven—the automobilist's heaven (assuming that there is one)—is much better.

I wish I could do justice to the Midi, but even Mistral could not do that. It is the most fruitful, lusscious land one can imagine. Everything there seems good to eat, to smell of—to devour in some way. The vines were loaded with purple and topaz grapes, and I was dying to steal some, though for a few francs we had bought a basket of clusters, with other luncheon supplies, in Arles. It finally became necessary to stop and eat these things—those grape fields were too tempting.

It is my opinion that nothing in the world is more enjoyable than an automobile roadside luncheon.

One does not need to lug a heavy basket mile after mile until a suitable place is found, and compromise at last because the flesh rebels. With a car, a mile, two miles, five miles, are matters of a few minutes. You run along leisurely until you reach the brook, the shade, the seclusion that invites you. Then you are fresh and cool and deliberate. No need to hurry because of the long tug home again. You enjoy the things you have brought, unfretted by fatigue, undismayed by the prospect ahead. You are in no hurry to go. You linger and smoke and laze a little and discuss the environment—the fields, the growing things, the people through whose lands and lives you are cutting a cross-section, as it seems. You wonder about their customs, their diversions, what they do in winter, how it is in their homes. You speculate on their history, on what the land was like in its primeval period before there were any fields and homes—civilized homes—there at all. Perhaps —though this is unlikely—you *know* a little about these things. It is no advantage; your speculations are just as valuable and more picturesque. There are many pleasant things about motor gypsying, but our party, at least, agreed that the wayside luncheon is the pleasantest of all.

Furthermore, it is economical. Unless one wants hot dishes, you can get more things, and more delicious things, in the village shops or along the way than you can find at the wayside hotel or restaurant, and for half the amount. Our luncheon that day—we ate it between Arles and Tarascon—consisted of tinned chicken, fresh bread with sweet butter,

Roquefort cheese, ripe grapes, and some French cakes—plenty, and all of the best, at a cost of about sixty cents for our party of four. And when we were finally ready to go, and had cleaned up and secreted every particle of paper or other refuse (for the true motorist never leaves a place unsightly) we felt quite as pleased with ourselves and the world, and the things of the infinite, as if we had paid two or three times as much for a meal within four walls.

Chapter VII

TO TARASCON AND BEAUCAIRE

IT is no great distance from Arles to Tarascon, and, leisurely as we travel, we had reached the home of Tartarin in a little while. We were tempted to stop over at Tarascon, for the name had that inviting sound which always belongs to the localities of pure romance—that is to say, fiction—and it has come about that Tarascon belongs more to Daudet than to history, while right across the river is Beaucaire, whose name, at least, Booth Tarkington has pre-empted for one of his earliest heroes. After all, it takes an author to make a town really celebrated. Thousands of Americans who have scarcely heard the name of Arles are intimately familiar with that of Tarascon. Of course the town has to contribute something. It must either be a place where something has happened, or *could* happen, or it must have a name with a fine sound, and it should be located in about the right quarter of the globe. When such a place catches the fancy of an author who has the gift of making the ideal seem reality, he has but to say the magic words and the fame of that place is sure.

Not that Tarascon has not had real history and romance; it has had plenty of both. Five hundred years ago the "Good King René" of Anjou, who was a

painter and a writer, as well as a king, came to Tarascon to spend his last days in the stern, perpendicular castle which had been built for him on the banks of the Rhone. It is used as a jail now, but King René held a joyous court there and a web of romance clings to his memory. King René's castle does not look like a place for romance. It looks like an artificial precipice. We were told we could visit it by making a sufficiently polite application to the *Mairie*, but it did not seem worth while. In the first place, I did not know how to make a polite application to visit a jail—not in French—and then it was better to imagine King René's festivities than to look upon a reality of misfortune.

The very name of Tarascon has to do with story. Far back, in the dim traditionary days, one St. Martha delivered the place from a very evil dragon, the Tarasque, for whom they showed their respect by giving his name to their town.

Beaucaire, across the river, is lighted by old tradition, too. It was the home of Aucassin and Nicollette, for one thing, and anyone who has read that poem, either in the original or in Andrew Lang's exquisite translation, will have lived, for a moment at least, in the tender light of legendary tale.

We drove over to Beaucaire, and Narcissa and I scaled a garden terrace to some ruined towers and battlements, all that is left of the ancient seat of the Montmorencys. It is a romantic ruin from a romantic day. It was built back in the twelve hundreds—when there were still knights and troubadours, and the former jousted at a great fair which was held

there, and the latter reclined on the palace steps, surrounded by ladies and gallants in silken array, and sang songs of Palestine and the Crusades. As time went on a light tissue of legend was woven around the castle itself—half-mythical tales of its earlier centuries. Figures like Aucassin and Nicollette emerged and were made so real by those who chanted or recited the marvel of their adventures, that they still live and breathe with youth when their gallant castle itself is no more than vacant towers and fragmentary walls. The castle of Beaucaire looks across to the defiant walls of King René's castle in Tarascon and I believe there used to be some sturdy wars between them. If not, I shall construct one some day, when I am less busy, and feeling in the romantic form. It will be as good history as most castle history, and I think I shall make Beaucaire win. King René was a good soul, but I am doubtful about those who followed him, and his castle, so suitable to-day for a jail, does not invite sympathy. The Montmorency castle was dismantled in 1632, according to the guidebook, by Richelieu, who beheaded its last tenant—some say with a cleaver, a serviceable utensil for such work.

Beaucaire itself is not a pretty town—not a clean town. I believe Nicollette was shut up for a time in one of its houses—we did not inquire which one—any of them would be bad enough to-day.

It is altogether easy to keep to the road in France. You do not wind in and out with unmarked routes crossing and branching at every turn. You travel a hard, level way, often as straight as a ruling stick

and pointed in the right direction. Where roads branch, or cross, there are signboards. All the national roads are numbered, and your red-book map shows these numbers—the chances of mistake being thus further lessened. We had practiced a good deal at asking in the politest possible French the way to any elusive destination. The book said that in France one generally takes off his hat in making such an inquiry, so I practiced that until I got it to seem almost inoffensive, not to say jaunty, and the formula "*Je vous demande pardon,* but—*quel est le chemin pour*—" whatever the place was. Sometimes I could even do it without putting in the "but," and was proud, and anxious to show it off at any opportunity. But it got dusty with disuse. You can't ask a man "*quel est le chemin*" for anywhere when you are on the straight road going there, or in front of a signboard which is shouting the information. I only got to unload that sentence twice between Arles and Avignon, and once I forgot to take off my hat; when I did, the man didn't understand me.

With the blue mountains traveling always at our right, with level garden and vineland about us, we drifted up the valley of the Rhone and found ourselves, in mid-afternoon, at the gates of Avignon. That is not merely a poetic figure. Avignon has veritable gates—and towering crenelated walls with ramparts, all about as perfect as when they were built, nearly six hundred years ago.

We had heard Avignon called the finest existing specimen of a mediæval walled city, but somehow one does not realize such things from hearing the mere

"Where Roads Branch or Cross There Are Signboards. . . . You Can't Ask a Man 'Quel Est le Chemin' for Anywhere When You Are in Front of a Signboard Which Is Shouting the Information"

words. We stopped the car to stare up at this overtopping masonry, trying to believe that it had been standing there already three hundred years, looking just about as it looks to-day, when Shakespeare was writing plays in London. Those are the things we never really believe. We only acknowledge them and pass on.

Very little of Avignon has overflowed its massive boundaries; the fields were at our backs as we halted in the great portals. We halted because we noticed the word "*L'Octroi*" on one of the towers. But, as before, the *l'octroi* man merely glanced into our vehicle and waved us away.

We were looking down a wide shaded avenue of rather modern, even if foreign, aspect, and full of life. We drove slowly, hunting, as we passed along, for one of the hotels set down in the red-book as "comfortable, with modern improvements," including "gar. *grat.*"—that is to say, garage gratis, such being the custom of this land. Narcissa, who has an eye for hotels, spied one presently, a rather imposing-looking place with a long, imposing name. But the management was quite modest as to terms when I displayed our T. C. de France membership card, and the "gar. *grat.*"—this time in the inner court of the hotel itself—was a neat place with running water and a concrete floor. Not very ancient for mediæval Avignon, but one can worry along without antiquities in a hotel.

Chapter VIII

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST

AVIGNON, like Arles, was colonized by the Romans, but the only remains of that time are now in its museum. At Arles the Romans did great things; its heyday was the period of their occupation. Conditions were different at Avignon. Avenio, as they called it, seems to have been a kind of outpost, walled and fortified, but not especially glorified. Very little was going on at Avenio. Christians were seldom burned there. In time a Roman emperor came to Arles, and its people boasted that it was to become the Roman capital. Nothing like that came to Avenio; it would require another thousand years and another Roman occupation to mature its grand destiny.

I do not know just how it worried along during those stormy centuries of waiting, but with plenty of variety, no doubt. I suppose barbarians came like summer leafage, conquered and colonized, mixing the blood of a new race. It became a republic about twelve hundred and something—small, but tough and warlike—commanding the respect of seigneurs and counts, even of kings. Christianity, meantime, had prospered. Avignon had contributed to the Crusades and built churches. Also, a cathedral,

though little dreaming that in its sacristy would one day lie the body of a pope.

Avignon's day, however, was even then at hand. Sedition was rife in Italy and the popes, driven from Rome, sought refuge in France. Near Avignon was a small papal dominion of which Carpentras was the capital, and the pope, then Clement V, came often to Avignon. This was honor, but when one day the Bishop of Avignon was made Pope John XXII, and established his seat in his own home, the little city became suddenly what Arles had only hoped to be—the capital of the world.

If one were permitted American parlance at this point, he would say that a boom now set in in Avignon.[1] Everybody was gay, everybody busy, everybody prosperous. The new pope straightway began to enlarge and embellish his palace, and the community generally followed suit. During the next sixty or seventy years about everything that is to-day of importance was built or rebuilt. New churches were erected, old ones restored. The ancient Roman wall was replaced by the splendid new one. The papal palace was enlarged and strengthened until it became a mighty fortress—one of the grandest structures in Europe. The popes went back to Rome, then, but their legates remained and from their strong citadel administered the affairs of that district for four turbulent centuries. In 1791, Avignon united her fortunes to those of France, and through revolution and bloodshed has come again to freedom and prosperity

[1] Alphonse Daudet's "La Mule de Pape," in his *Lettres de Mon Moulin*, gives a delightful picture of Avignon at this period.

and peace. I do not know what the population of Avignon was in the day of her greater glory. To-day it is about fifty thousand, and, as it is full to the edges, it was probably not more populous then.

We did not hurry in Avignon. We only loitered about the streets a little the first afternoon, practicing our French on the sellers of postal cards. It was a good place for such practice. If there was a soul in Avignon besides ourselves with a knowledge of English he failed to make himself known. Not even in our hotel was there a manager, porter, or waiter who could muster an English word.

Narcissa and I explored more than the others and discovered the City Hall and a theater and a little open square with a big monument. We also got a distant glimpse of some great towering walls which we knew to be the Palace of the Popes.

Now and again we were assailed by beggars—soiled and persistent small boys who annoyed us a good deal until we concocted an impromptu cure. It was a poem, in French—and effective:

Allez! Allez!
Je n'ai pas de monnaie!
Allons! Allons!
Je n'ai pas de l'argent!

A Frenchman might not have had the courage to mortify his language like that, but we had, and when we marched to that defiant refrain the attacking party fell back.

We left the thoroughfare and wandered down into narrow side streets, cobble-paved and winding,

between high, age-stained walls—streets and walls that have surely not been renewed since the great period when the coming of the popes rebuilt Avignon. So many of the houses are apparently of one age and antiquity they might all have sprung up on the same day. What a bustle and building there must have been in those first years after the popes came! Nothing could be too new and fine for the chosen city. Now they are old again, but not always shabby. Many of them, indeed, are of impressive grandeur, with carved casings and ponderous doors. No sign of life about these—no glimpse of luxury, faded or fresh—within. Whatever the life they hold—whatever its past glories or present decline, it is shut away. Only the shabbier homes were open—women at their evening duties, children playing about the stoop. *They* had nothing to conceal. Tradition, lineage, pride, poverty—they had inherited their share of these things, but they did not seem to be worrying about it. Their affairs were open to inspection; and their habits of dress and occupation caused us to linger, until the narrow streets grew dim and more full of evening echoes, while light began to twinkle in the little basement shops where the ancestors of these people had bought and sold for such a long, long time.

Chapter IX

IN THE CITADEL OF FAITH

WE were not very thorough sight-seers. We did not take a guidebook in one hand and a pencil in the other and check the items, thus cleaning up in the fashion of the neat, businesslike tourist. We seldom even had a program. We just wandered out in some general direction, and made a discovery or two, looked it over, surmised about it and passed judgment on its artistic and historical importance, just as if we knew something of those things; then when we got to a quiet place we took out the book and looked up what we had seen, and quite often, with the book's assistance, reversed our judgments and went back and got an altogether new set of impressions, and kept whichever we liked best. It was a loose system, to be recommended only for its variety. At the church of St. Agricole, for instance, which we happened upon when we started out one morning, we had a most interesting half hour discussing the age and beauty of its crumbling exterior and wandering about in its dimness, speculating concerning its frescoes and stained marbles and ancient tombs. When, later, we sat on the steps outside and looked it up and found it had been established away back in 680, and twice since restored; that the fifteenth-century holy-water basin was an especially

fine one; that the tombs and altar piece, the sculpture and frescoes were regarded as "remarkable examples," we were deeply impressed and went back to verify these things. Then we could see that it was all just as the book said.

But the procedure was somewhat different at the Palace of the Popes. We knew where we were going then, for we saw its towers looming against the sky, and no one could mistake that pile in Avignon. Furthermore, we paid a small fee at its massive arched entrance, and there was a guardian, or guide, to show us through. It is true he spoke only French—Provençal French—but two gracious Italian ladies happened to be going through at the same time and, like all cultured continentals, they spoke a variety of tongues, including American. The touch of travel makes the whole world kin, and they threw out a line when they saw us floundering, and towed us through. It was a gentle courtesy which we accepted with thankful hearts.

We were in the central court first, the dull, sinister walls towering on every side. The guide said that executions had taken place there, and once, in later times—the period of the Revolution—a massacre in which seventy perished. He also mentioned a bishop of the earlier period who, having fallen into disfavor, was skinned alive and burned just outside the palace entrance. Think of doing that to a bishop!

Our conductor showed us something which we were among the first to see. Excavation was going on, and near the entrance some workmen were uncovering a large square basin—a swimming pool, he said—

probably of Roman times. Whatever had stood there had doubtless fallen into obliterated ruin by the time the papal palace was begun.

A survey of the court interior showed that a vast scheme of restoration was going on. The old fortress had suffered from siege more than once, and time had not spared it; but with that fine pride which the French have in their monuments, and with a munificence which would seem to be limitless, they were reconstructing perfectly every ruined part, and would spend at least two million dollars, we were told, to make the labor complete. Battered corners of towers had been carefully rebuilt, tumbled parapets replaced. We stood facing an exquisite mullioned window whose carved stone outlines were entirely new, yet delicately and finely cut, certainly at a cost of many thousand francs. The French do not seem to consider expense in a work of that sort. Concrete imitations will not do. Whatever is replaced must be as it was in the beginning.

Inside we found ourselves in the stately audience room, measuring some fifty by one hundred and eighty feet, its lofty ceiling supported by massive Gothic arches, all as complete as when constructed. Each missing piece or portion has been replaced. It was scarcely more perfect when the first papal audience was held there and when Queen Jeanne of Naples came to plead for absolution, nearly six centuries ago. It was of overpowering size and interest, and in one of the upper corners was a picture I shall not soon forget. It was not a painting or tapestry, but it might have been either of these things and

less beautiful. It was a living human being, a stone carver on a swinging high seat, dressed in his faded blue cap and blouse and chopping away at a lintel. But he had the face and beard and, somehow, the figure of a saint. He turned to regard us with a mild, meditative interest, the dust on his beard and dress completing the harmony with the gray wall behind him, the embodied spirit of restoration.

We ascended to the pontifical chapel, similar in size and appearance to the room below. We passed to other gigantic apartments, some of them rudely and elaborately decorated by the military that in later years made this a garrison. We were taken to the vast refectory, where once there was a great central table, the proportions of which were plainly marked by an outline on the stone floor, worn by the feet of feasting churchmen. Then we went to the kitchen, still more impressive in its suggestion of the stouter needs of piety. Its chimney is simply a gigantic central funnel that, rising directly from the four walls, goes towering and tapering toward the stars. I judge the cooks built their fires in the center of this room, hanging their pots on cranes, swinging their meats barbecue fashion, opening the windows for air and draught. Those old popes and legates were no weaklings, to have a kitchen like that. Their appetites and digestions, like their faith, were of a robust and militant sort.

I dare say it would require a week to go through all this palace, so the visitor is shown only samples of it. We ascended to one of the towers and looked down, far down, on the roofs of Avignon—an expanse

of brown tiling, toned by the ages, but otherwise not greatly different from what the popes saw when this tower and these housetops were new. Beyond are the blue hills which have not changed. Somewhere out there Petrarch's Laura was buried, but the grave has vanished utterly, the church is a mere remnant.

As we stood in the window a cold breath of wind suddenly blew in—almost piercing for the season. "The mistral," our conductor said, and, though he did not cross himself, we knew by his exalted smile that he felt in it the presence of the poet of the south.

Then he told us that Mistral had appointed him as one of those who were commissioned to preserve in its purity the Provençal tongue. That he was very proud of it was certain, and willing to let that wind blow on him as a sort of benediction. It is said, however, that the mistral wind is not always agreeable in Avignon. It blows away disease, but it is likely to overdo its work. "Windy Avignon, liable to the plague when it has not the wind, and plagued by the wind when it has it," is a saying at least as old as this palace.

We got a generous example of it when we at last descended to the street. There it swirled and raced and grabbed at us until we had to button everything tightly and hold fast to our hats. We took refuge in the old cathedral of Notre Dame des Dômes, where John XXII, who brought this glory to Avignon, lies in his Gothic tomb. All the popes of Avignon were crowned here; it was the foremost church of Christendom for the better part of a century. We could see

but little of the interior, for, with the now clouded sky, the place was too dark. In the small chapel where the tomb stands it was dim and still. It is the holy place of Avignon.

A park adjoins the church and we went into it, but the mistral wind was tearing through the trees and we crossed and descended by a long flight to the narrow streets. Everywhere about us the lower foundations of the papal palace joined the living rock, its towers seeming to climb upward to the sky. It was as if it had grown out of the rock, indestructible, eternal, itself a rock of ages.

We are always saying how small the world is, and we had it suddenly brought home to us as we stood there under the shadow of those overtopping heights. We had turned to thank our newly made friends and to say good-by. One of them said, "You are from America; perhaps you might happen to know a friend of ours there," and she named one whom we did know very well indeed—one, in fact, whose house we had visited only a few months before. How strange it seemed to hear that name from two women of Florence there in the ancient city, under those everlasting walls.

Chapter X

AN OLD TRADITION AND A NEW EXPERIENCE

AMONG the things I did on the ship was to read the *Automobile Instruction Book*. I had never done it before. I had left all technical matters to a man hired and trained for the business. Now I was going to a strange land with a resolve to do all the things myself. So I read the book.

It was as fascinating as a novel, and more impressive. There never was a novel like it for action and psychology. When I came to the chapter "Thirty-seven reasons why the motor may not start," and feverishly read what one had better try in the circumstances, I could see that as a subject for strong emotional treatment a human being is nothing to an automobile.

Then there was the oiling diagram. A physiological chart would be nowhere beside it. It was a perfect maze of hair lines and arrow points, and looked as if it needed to be combed. There were places to be oiled daily, others to be oiled weekly, some to be oiled monthly, some every thousand miles. There were also places to be greased at all these periods, and some when you happened to think of it. You had to put on your glasses and follow one of the fine lines to the lubricating point, then try to keep the point in your head until you could get under the car,

or over the car, or into the car, and trace it home. I could see that this was going to be interesting when the time came.

I did not consider that it had come when we landed at Marseilles. I said to the garage man there, in my terse French idiom, "Make it the oil and grease," and walked away. Now, at Avignon, the new regime must begin. In the bright little, light little hotel garage we would set our car in order. I say "we" because Narcissa, aged fifteen, being of a practical turn, said she would help me. I would "make it the oil and grease," and Narcissa would wash and polish. So we began. The Joy, aged ten, was audience.

Narcissa enjoyed her job. There was a hose in it, and a sponge and nice rubbing rags and polish, and she went at it in her strenuous way, and hosed me up one side and down the other at times when I was tracing some blind lead and she wasn't noticing carefully.

I said I would make a thorough job of it. I would oil and grease all the daily, weekly, and monthly, and even the once-in-a-while places. We would start fair from Avignon.

I am a resolute person. I followed those tangled lines and labyrinthian ways into the vital places of our faithful vehicle. Some led to caps, big and little, which I filled with grease. Most of them were full already, but I gave them another dab for luck. Some of the lines led to tiny caps and holes into which I squirted oil. Some led to a dim uncertainty, into which I squirted or dabbed something in a general way. Some led to mere blanks, and I greased those.

It sounds rather easy, but that is due to my fluent style. It was not easy; it was a hot, messy, scratchy, grunting job. Those lines were mostly blind leads, and full of smudgy, even painful surprises. Some people would have been profane, but I am not like that—not with Narcissa observing me. One hour, two, went by, and I was still consulting the chart and dabbing with the oil can and grease stick. The chart began to show wear; *it* would not need greasing again for years.

Meantime Narcissa had finished her washing and polishing, and was putting dainty touches on the glass and metal features to kill time. I said at last that possibly I had missed some places, but I didn't think they could be important ones. Narcissa looked at me, then, and said that maybe I had missed places on the car but that I hadn't missed any on myself. She said I was a sight and probably never could be washed clean again. It is true that my hands were quite solidly black, and, while I did not recall wiping them on my face, I must have done so. When Narcissa asked how soon I was going to grease the car again, I said possibly in about a thousand years. But that was petulance; I knew it would be sooner. Underneath all I really had a triumphant feeling, and Narcissa was justly proud of her work, too. We agreed that our car had never looked handsomer and shinier since our first day of ownership. I said I was certain it had never been so thoroughly greased. We would leave Avignon in style.

We decided to cross the Rhone at Avignon. We wanted at least a passing glance at Villeneuve, and

a general view of Avignon itself, which was said to be finest from across the river. We would then continue up the west bank—there being a special reason for this—a reason with a village in it—one Beauchastel —not set down on any of our maps, but intimately concerned with our travel program, as will appear later.

We did not leave Avignon by the St. Bénézet bridge. We should have liked that, for it is one of those bridges built by a miracle, away back in the twelfth century when they used miracles a good deal for such work. Sometimes Satan was induced to build them overnight, but I believe that was still earlier. Satan seems to have retired from active bridge-building by the twelfth century. It was a busy period for him at home.

So the Bénézet bridge was built by a boy of that name—a little shepherd of twelve, who received a command in a dream to go to Avignon and build a bridge across the Rhone. He said:

"I cannot leave my sheep, and I have but three farthings in the world."

"Your flocks will not stray," said the voice, "and an angel will lead thee."

Bénézet awoke and found beside him a pilgrim whom he somehow knew to be an angel. So they journeyed together and after many adventures reached Avignon. Here the pilgrim disappeared and Bénézet went alone to where a bishop was preaching to the people. There, in the presence of the assembly, Bénézet stated clearly that Heaven had sent him to build a bridge across the Rhone. Angry at the inter-

ruption, the bishop ordered the ragged boy to be taken in charge by the guard and punished for insolence and untruth. That was an ominous order. Men had been skinned alive on those instructions. But Bénézet repeated his words to the officer, a rough man, who said:

"Can a beggar boy like you do what neither the saints nor Emperor Charlemagne has been able to accomplish? Pick up this stone as a beginning, and carry it to the river. If you can do that I may believe in you."

It was a sizable stone, being thirteen feet long by seven broad—thickness not given, though probably three feet, for it was a fragment of a Roman wall. It did not trouble Bénézet, however. He said his prayers, and lightly lifted it to his shoulder and carried it across the town! Some say he whistled softly as he passed along.

I wish I had lived then. I would almost be willing to trade centuries to see Bénézet surprise those people, carrying in that easy way a stone that reached up to the second-story windows. Bénézet carried the stone to the bank of the river and set it down where the first arch of the bridge would stand.

There was no trouble after that. Everybody wanted to stand well with Bénézet. Labor and contributions came unasked. In eleven years the great work was finished, but Bénézet did not live to see it. He died four years before the final stones were laid, was buried in a chapel on the bridge itself and canonized as a saint. There is another story about him, but I like this one best.

Bénézet's bridge was a gay place during the days of the popes at Avignon. Music and dancing were continuously going on there. It is ready for another miracle now. Only four arches of its original eighteen are standing. Storm and flood did not destroy it, but war. Besiegers and besieged broke down the arches, and at last, more than two hundred years ago, repairs were given up. It is a fine, firm-looking fragment that remains. One wishes, for the sake of the little shepherd boy, that it might be restored once more and kept solid through time.

Passing along under the ramparts of Avignon, we crossed the newer, cheaper bridge, and took the first turn to the right. It was a leafy way, and here and there between the trees we had splendid glimpses of the bastioned walls and castle-crowned heights of Avignon. Certainly there is no more impressive mediæval picture in all Europe.

But on one account we were not entirely satisfied. It was not the view that disturbed us; it was ourselves—our car. We were smoking—smoking badly, disgracefully; one could not deny it. In New York City we would have been taken in charge at once. At first I said it was only a little of the fresh oil burning off the engine, and that it would stop presently. But that excuse wore out. It would have taken quarts to make a smudge like that. When the wind was with us we traveled in a cloud, like prophets and deities of old, and the passengers grumbled. The Joy suggested that we would probably blow up soon.

Then we began to make another discovery; when now and then the smoke cleared away a little, we

found we were not in Villeneuve at all. We had not entirely crossed the river, but only halfway; we were on an island. I began to feel that our handsome start had not turned out well.

We backed around and drove slowly to the bridge again, our distinction getting more massive and solid every minute. Disaster seemed imminent. The passengers were inclined to get out and walk. I said, at last, that we would go back to a garage I had noticed outside the walls. I put it on the grounds that we needed gasoline.

It was not far, and the doors stood open. The men inside saw us coming with our gorgeous white tail filling the landscape behind us, and got out of the way. Then they gathered cautiously to examine us.

"Too much oil," they said.

In my enthusiasm I had overdone the thing. I had poured quarts into the crank case when there was probably enough there already. I had not been altogether to blame. Two little telltale cocks that were designed to drip when there was sufficient oil had failed to drip because they were stopped with dust. Being new and green, I had not thought of that possibility. A workman poked a wire into those little cocks and drew off the fuel we had been burning in that lavish way. So I had learned something, but it seemed a lot of smoke for such a small spark of experience. Still, it was a relief to know that it was nothing worse, and while the oil was dripping to its proper level we went back into the gates of Avignon, where, lunching in a pretty garden under some trees, we made light of our troubles, as is our way.

Chapter XI

WAYSIDE ADVENTURES

SO we took a new start and made certain that we entirely crossed the river this time. We were in Villeneuve-les-Avignon—that is, the "new town"—but it did not get that name recently, if one may judge from its looks. Villeneuve, in fact, is fourteen hundred years old, and shows its age. It was in its glory six centuries ago, when King Philippe le Bel built his tower at the end of Bénézet's bridge, and Jean le Bon built one of the sternest-looking fortresses in France—Fort St. André. Time has made the improvements since then. It has stained the walls and dulled the sharp masonry of these monuments; it has crushed and crumbled the feebler structures and filled the streets with emptiness and silence. Villeneuve was a thronging, fighting, praying place once, but the throng has been reduced and the fighting and praying have become matters of individual enterprise.

I wish now we had lingered at Villeneuve-les-Avignon. I have rarely seen a place that seemed so to invite one to forget the activities of life and go groping about among the fragments of history. But we were under the influence of our bad start, and impelled to move on. Also, Villeneuve was

overshadowed by the magnificence of the Palace of the Popes, which, from its eternal seat on le Rocher des Doms, still claimed us. We briefly visited St. André, the tower of Philippe le Bel, and loitered a little in a Chartreuse monastery—a perfect wilderness of ruin; then slipped away, following the hard, smooth road through a garden and wonderland, the valley of the Rhone.

I believe there are no better vineyards in France than those between Avignon and Bagnols. The quality of the grapes is another matter; they are probably sour. All the way along those luscious topaz and amethyst clusters had been disturbing, but my conscience had held firm and I had passed them by. Sometimes I said: "There are tons of those grapes; a few bunches would never be missed." But Narcissa and the others said it would be stealing; besides, there were houses in plain view.

But there is a limit to all things. In a level, sheltered place below Bagnols we passed a vineyard shut in by trees, with no house in sight. And what a vineyard! Ripening in the afternoon sun, clustered such gold and purple bunches as were once warmed by the light of Eden. I looked casually in different directions and slowed down. Not a sign of life anywhere. I brought the car to a stop. I said, "This thing has gone far enough."

Conscience dozed. The protests of the others fell on heedless ears. I firmly crossed the irrigating ditch which runs along all those French roads, stepped among the laden vines, picked one of those lucent, yellow bunches and was about to pick another when

I noticed something with a human look stir to life a little way down the row.

Conscience awoke with something like a spasm. I saw at once that taking those grapes was wrong; I almost dropped the bunch I had. Narcissa says I ran, but that is a mistake. There was not room. I made about two steps and plunged into the irrigating canal, which I disremembered for the moment, my eyes being fixed on the car. Narcissa says she made a grab at my grapes as they sailed by. I seemed to be a good while getting out of the irrigating ditch, but Narcissa thinks I was reasonably prompt. I had left the engine running, and some seconds later, when we were putting temptation behind us on third speed, I noticed that the passengers seemed to be laughing. When I inquired as to what amused them they finally gasped out that the thing which had moved among the grapevines was a goat, as if that made any difference to a person with a sensitive conscience.

It is not likely that any reader of these chapters will stop overnight at Bagnols. We should hardly have rested there, but evening was coming on and the sky had a stormy look. Later we were glad, for we found ourselves in an inn where d'Artagnan, or his kind, lodged, in the days when knights went riding. Travelers did not arrive in automobiles when that hostelry was built, and not frequently in carriages. They came on horseback and clattered up to the open door and ordered tankards of good red wine, and drank while their horses stretched their necks to survey the interior scenery. The old

worn cobbles are still at the door, and not much has changed within. A niche holds a row of candles, and the traveler takes one of them and lights himself to bed. His room is an expanse and his bed stands in a curtained alcove—the bedstead an antique, the bed billowy, clean, and comfortable, as all beds are in France. Nothing has been changed there for a long time. The latest conveniences are of a date not more recent than the reign of Marie Antoinette, for they are exactly the kind she used, still to be seen at Versailles. And the dinner was good, with red and white flagons strewn all down the table—such a dinner as d'Artagnan and his wild comrades had, no doubt, and if prices have not changed they paid five francs fifty, or one dollar and ten cents each, for dinner, lodging, and *petit déjeuner* (coffee, rolls, and jam)—garage free.

Bagnols is unimportant to the tourist, but it is old and quaint, and it has what may be found in many unimportant places in France, at least one beautiful work of art—a soldier's monument, in this instance; *not* a stiff effigy of an infantryman with a musket, cut by some gifted tombstone sculptor, but a female figure of Victory, full of vibrant life and inspiration—a true work of art. France is full of such things as that—one finds them in most unexpected places.

The valley of the Rhone grew more picturesque as we ascended. Now and again, at our left, rocky bluffs rose abruptly, some of them crowned with ruined towers and equally ruined villages, remnants of feudalism, of the lord and his vassals who had

fought and flourished there in that time when France was making the romantic material which writers ever since have been so busily remaking and adorning that those old originals would stare and gasp if they could examine some of it now. How fine and grand it seems to picture the lord and his men, all bright and shining, riding out under the portcullis on glossy prancing and armored horses to meet some aggressive and equally shining detachment of feudalism from the next hilltop. In the valley they meet, with ringing cries and the clash of steel. Foeman matches foeman—it is a series of splendid duels, combats to be recounted by the fireside for generations. Then, at the end, the knightly surrender of the conquered, the bended knee and acknowledgment of fealty, gracious speeches from the victor as to the bravery and prowess of the defeated, after which, the welcome of fair ladies and high wassail for all concerned. Everybody happy, everybody satisfied: wounds apparently do not count or interfere with festivities. The dead disappear in some magic way. I do not recall that they are ever buried.

Just above Rochemaure was one of the most imposing of these ruins. The castle that crowned the hilltop had been a fine structure in its day. The surrounding outer wall which inclosed its village extended downward to the foot of the hill to the road—and still inclosed a village, though the more ancient houses seemed tenantless. It was built for offense and defense, that was certain, and doubtless had been used for both. We did not stop to dig

up that romance. Not far away, by the roadside, stood what was apparently a Roman column. It had been already old and battered—a mere fragment of a ruin—when the hilltop castle and its village were brave and new.

It was above Rochemaure—I did not identify the exact point—that an opportunity came which very likely I shall never have again. On a bluff high above an ancient village, so old and curious that it did not belong to reality at all, there was a great château, not a ruin—at least, not a tumbled ruin, though time-beaten and gray—but a good complete château, and across its mossy lintel a stained and battered wooden sign with the legend, "*À Louer*"—that is, "To Let."

I stopped the car. This, I said, was our opportunity. Nothing could be better than that ancient and lofty perch overlooking the valley of the Rhone. The "To Let" sign had been there certainly a hundred years, so the price would be reasonable. We could get it for a song; we would inherit its traditions, its secret passages, its donjons, its ghosts, its —I paused a moment, expecting enthusiasm, even eagerness, on the part of the family. Strange as it may seem, there wasn't a particle of either. I went over those things again, and added new and fascinating attractions. I said we would adopt the coat of arms of that old family, hyphenate its name with ours, and so in that cheap and easy fashion achieve a nobility which the original owner had probably shed blood to attain.

It was no use. The family looked up the hill with

an interest that was almost clammy. Narcissa asked, "How would you get the car up there?" The Joy said, "It would be a good place for bad dreams." The head of the expedition remarked, as if dismissing the most trivial item of the journey, that we'd better be going on or we should be late getting into Valence. So, after dreaming all my life of living in a castle, I had to give it up in that brief, incidental way.

Chapter XII

THE LOST NAPOLEON

NOW, it is just here that we reach the special reason which had kept us where we had a clear view of the eastward mountains, and particularly to the westward bank of the Rhone, where there was supposed to be a certain tiny village, one Beauchastel—a village set down on none of our maps, yet which was to serve as an important identifying mark. The reason had its beginning exactly twenty-two years before; that is to say, in September, 1891. Mark Twain was in Europe that year, seeking health and literary material, and toward the end of the summer—he was then at Ouchy, Switzerland—he decided to make a floating trip down the river Rhone. He found he could start from Lake Bourget in France, and, by paddling through a canal, reach the strong Rhone current, which would carry him seaward. Joseph Very, his favorite guide (mentioned in *A Tramp Abroad*), went over to Lake Bourget and bought a safe, flat-bottomed boat, retaining its former owner as pilot, and with these accessories Mark Twain made one of the most peaceful and delightful excursions of his life. Indeed, he enjoyed it so much and so lazily that after the first few days he gave up making extended notes and surrendered himself entirely to the languorous fascination of drifting idly

through the dreamland of southern France. On the whole, it was an eventless excursion, with one exception—a startling exception, as he believed.

One afternoon, when they had been drifting several days, he sighted a little village not far ahead, on the west bank, an ancient "jumble of houses," with a castle, one of the many along that shore. It looked interesting and he suggested that they rest there for the night. Then, chancing to glance over his shoulder toward the eastward mountains, he received a sudden surprise—a "soul-stirring shock," as he termed it later. The big blue eastward mountain was no longer a mere mountain, but a gigantic portrait in stone of one of his heroes. Eagerly turning to Joseph Very and pointing to the huge effigy, he asked him to name it. The courier said, "Napoleon." The boatman also said, "Napoleon." It seemed to them, indeed, almost uncanny, this lifelike, reclining figure of the conqueror, resting after battle, or, as Mark Twain put it, "dreaming of universal empire." They discussed it in awed voices, as one of the natural wonders of the world, which perhaps they had been the first to discover. They landed at the village, Beauchastel, and next morning Mark Twain, up early, watched the sun rise from behind the great stone face of his discovery. He made a pencil sketch in his notebook, and recorded the fact that the figure was to be seen from Beauchastel. That morning, drifting farther down the Rhone, they watched it until the human outlines changed.

Mark Twain's Rhone trip was continued as far as Arles, where the current slackened. He said that

some one would have to row if they went on, which would mean work, and that he was averse to work, even in another person. He gave the boat to its former owner, took Joseph, and rejoined the family in Switzerland.

Events thronged into Mark Twain's life: gay winters, summers of travel, heavy literary work, business cares and failures, a trip around the world, bereavement. Amid such a tumult the brief and quiet Rhone trip was seldom even remembered.

But ten or eleven years later, when he had returned to America and was surrounded by quieter things, he happened to remember the majestic figure of the first Napoleon discovered that September day while drifting down the Rhone. He recalled no more than that. His memory was always capricious—he had even forgotten that he made a sketch of the figure, with notes identifying the locality. He could picture clearly enough the incident, the phenomenon, the surroundings, but the name of the village had escaped him, and he located it too far down, between Arles and Avignon.

All his old enthusiasm returned now. He declared if the presence of this great natural wonder was made known to the world, tourists would flock to the spot, hotels would spring up there—all other natural curiosities would fall below it in rank. His listeners caught his enthusiasm. Theodore Stanton, the journalist, declared he would seek and find the "Lost Napoleon," as Mark Twain now called it, because he was unable to identify the exact spot. He assured Stanton that it would be perfectly easy to

find, as he could take a steamer from Arles to Avignon, and by keeping watch he could not miss it. Stanton returned to Europe and began the search. I am not sure that he undertook the trip himself, but he made diligent inquiries of Rhone travelers and steamer captains, and a lengthy correspondence passed between him and Mark Twain on the subject.

No one had seen the "Lost Napoleon." Travelers passing between Avignon and Arles kept steady watch on the east range, but the apparition did not appear. Mark Twain eventually wrote an article, intending to publish it, in the hope that some one would report the mislaid emperor. However, he did not print the sketch, which was fortunate enough, for with its misleading directions it would have made him unpopular with disappointed travelers. The locality of his great discovery was still a mystery when Mark Twain died.

So it came about that our special reason for following the west bank of the Rhone—the Beauchastel side, in plain view of the eastward mountains—was to find the "Lost Napoleon." An easy matter, it seemed in prospect, for we had what the others had lacked —that is to say, exact information as to its locality —the notes, made twenty-two years before by Mark Twain himself[1]—the pencil sketch, and memoranda stating that the vision was to be seen opposite the village of Beauchastel.

But now there developed what seemed to be another mystery. Not only our maps and our red-

[1] At Mark Twain's death his various literary effects passed into the hands of his biographer, the present writer.

book, but patient inquiry as well, failed to reveal any village or castle by the name of Beauchastel. It was a fine, romantic title, and we began to wonder if it might not be a combination of half-caught syllables, remembered at the moment of making the notes, and converted by Mark Twain's imagination into this happy sequence of sounds.

So we must hunt and keep the inquiries going. We had begun the hunt as soon as we left Avignon, and the inquiries when there was opportunity. Then presently the plot thickened. The line of those eastward mountains began to assume many curious shapes. Something in their formation was unlike other mountains, and soon it became not difficult to imagine a face almost anywhere. Then at one point appeared a real face, no question this time as to the features, only it was not enough like the face of the sketch to make identification sure. We discussed it anxiously and with some energy, and watched it a long time, thinking possibly it would gradually melt into the right shape, and that Beauchastel or some similarly sounding village would develop along the river bank.

But the likeness did not improve, and, while there were plenty of villages, there was none with a name the sound of which even suggested Beauchastel. Altogether we discovered as many as five faces that day, and became rather hysterical at last, and called them our collection of lost Napoleons, though among them was not one of which we could say with conviction, "Behold, the Lost Napoleon!" This brought us to Bagnols, and we had a fear now that we were

past the viewpoint—that somehow our search, or our imagination, had been in vain.

But then came the great day. Up and up the Rhone, interested in so many things that at times we half forgot to watch the eastward hills, passing village after village, castle after castle, but never the "jumble of houses" and the castle that commanded the vision of the great chief lying asleep along the eastern horizon.

I have not mentioned, I think, that at the beginning of most French villages there is a signboard, the advertisement of a firm of auto-stockists, with the name of the place, and the polite request to "*Ralentir*"—that is, to "go slow." At the other end of the village is another such a sign, and on the reverse you read, as you pass out, "*Merci*"—which is to say, "Thanks," for going slowly; so whichever way you come you get information, advice, and politeness from these boards, a feature truly French.

Well, it was a little way above the château which I did not rent, and we were driving along slowly, thinking of nothing at all, entering an unimportant-looking place, when Narcissa, who always sees everything, suddenly uttered the magical word "Beauchastel!"

It was like an electric shock—the soul-stirring shock which Mark Twain had received at the instant of his great discovery. Beauchastel! Not a figment, then, but a reality—the veritable jumble of houses we had been seeking, and had well-nigh given up as a myth. Just there the houses interfered with our view, but a hundred yards farther along a vista

opened to the horizon, and there at last, in all its mightiness and dignity and grandeur, lay the Lost Napoleon! It is not likely that any other natural figure in stone ever gave two such sudden and splendid thrills of triumph, first, to its discoverer, and, twenty-two years later, almost to the day, to those who had discovered it again. There was no question this time. The colossal sleeping figure in its supreme repose confuted every doubt, resting where it had rested for a million years, and would still rest for a million more.

At first we spoke our joy eagerly, then fell into silence, looking and looking, loath to go, for fear it would change. At every opening we halted to look again, and always with gratification, for it did not change, or so gradually that for miles it traveled with us, and still at evening, when we were nearing Valence, there remained a great stone face on the horizon.

Chapter XIII

THE HOUSE OF HEADS

I OUGHT to say, I suppose, that we were no longer in Provence. Even at Avignon we were in Venaissin, according to present geography, and when we crossed the Rhone we passed into Languedoc. Now, at Valence, we were in Dauphiné, of which Valence is the "chief-lieu," meaning, I take it, the official headquarters. I do not think these are the old divisions at all, and in any case it all has been "the Midi," which to us is the Provence, the vineland, songland, and storyland of a nation where vine and song and story flourish everywhere so lavishly that strangers come, never to bring, but only to carry away.

At Valence, however, romance hesitates on the outskirts. The light of other days grows dim in its newer electric glow. Old castles surmount the hilltops, but one needs a field glass to see them. The city itself is modern and busy, prosperous in its manufacture of iron, silk, macaroni, and certain very good liquors.

I believe the chief attraction of Valence is the "House of the Heads." Our guidebook has a picture which shows Napoleon Bonaparte standing at the entrance, making his adieus to Montalivet, who, in a later day, was to become his minister.

Napoleon had completed his military education in the artillery school of Valence, and at the moment was setting out to fulfill his dream of conquest. It is rather curious, when you think of it, that the great natural stone portrait already described should be such a little distance away.

To go back to the House of the Heads: Our book made only the briefest mention of its construction, and told nothing at all of its traditions. We stood in front of it, gazing in the dim evening light at the crumbling carved faces of its façade, peering through into its ancient court where there are now apartments to let, wondering as to its history. One goes raking about in the dusty places of his memory at such moments; returning suddenly from an excursion of that sort, I said I recalled the story of a house of carved heads—something I had heard, or read, long ago—and that this must be the identical house concerning which the story had been told.

It was like this: There was a wealthy old bachelor of ancient days who had spent his life in collecting rare treasures of art; pictures, tapestries, choice metal-work, arms—everything that was beautiful and rare; his home was a storehouse of priceless things. He lived among them, attended only by a single servant—the old woman who had been his nurse—a plain, masculine creature, large of frame, still strong and brawny, stout of heart and of steadfast loyalty. When the master was away gathering new treasures she slept in the room where the arms were kept, with a short, sharp, two-edged museum piece by her couch, and without fear.

MARK TWAIN'S "LOST NAPOLEON"

"THE COLOSSAL SLEEPING FIGURE IN ITS SUPREME REPOSE"

One morning he told her of a journey he was about to take, and said: "I hesitate to leave you here alone. You are no longer young."

But she answered: "Only by the count of years, not by the measure of strength or vigilance. I am not afraid."

So he left her, to return on the third day. But on the evening of the second day, when the old servant went down to the lower basement for fuel—silently, in her softly slippered feet—she heard low voices at a small window that opened to the court. She crept over to it and found that a portion of the sash had been removed; listening, she learned that a group of men outside in the dusk were planning to enter and rob the house. They were to wait until she was asleep, then creep in through the window, make their way upstairs, kill her, and carry off the treasures.

It seemed a good plan, but as the old servant listened she formed a better one. She crept back upstairs, not to lock herself in and stand a siege, but to get her weapon, the short, heavy sword with its two razor edges. Then she came back and sat down to wait. While she was waiting she entertained herself by listening to their plans and taking a little quiet muscle exercise. By and by she heard them say that the old hag would surely be asleep by this time. The "old hag" smiled grimly and got ready.

A man put his head in. It was pitch dark inside, but just enough light came in from the stars for her to see where to strike. When half his body was through she made a clean slicing swing of the heavy

sword and the robber's head dropped on a little feather bed which she had thoughtfully provided. The old woman seized the shoulders and firmly drew the rest of the man inside. Another head came in, slowly, the shoulders following. With another swing of the sword they had parted company, and the grim avenging hands were silently dragging in the remnant. Another head and shoulders followed, another, and another, until six heads and bodies were stacked about the executioner and there was blood enough to swim in. The seventh robber did not appear immediately; something about the silence within made him reluctant. He was suspicious, he did not know of what. He put his head to the opening and whispered, asking if everything was all right. The old woman was no longer calm. The violent exercise and intense interest in her occupation had unnerved her. She was afraid she could not control her voice to answer, and that he would get away. She made a supreme effort and whispered, "Yes, all right." So he put in his head—very slowly—hesitated, and started to withdraw. The old woman, however, did not hesitate. She seized him by the hair, brought the sword down with a fierce one-hand swing, and the treasures of this world troubled him no more.

Then the old servant went crazy. Returning next morning, her master found her covered with blood, brandishing her sword, and repeating over and over, "Seven heads, and all mine," and at sight of him lost consciousness. She recovered far enough to tell her story, then, presently, died. But in her honor the master rebuilt the front of his dwell-

ing and had carved upon it the heads of the men she had so promptly and justly punished.

Now, I said, this must be the very house, and we regarded it with awe and tried to locate the little cellar window where the execution had taken place. It was well enough in the evening dimness, but in the morning when we went around there again I privately began to have doubts as to the legend's authenticity, at least so far as this particular house was concerned. The heads, by daylight, did not look like the heads of house breakers—not any house breakers of my acquaintance—and I later consulted a guidebook which attached to them the names of Homer, Hippocrates, Aristotle, Pythagoras, etc., and I don't think those were the names of the parties concerned in this particular affair. It's very hard to give up a good and otherwise perfectly fitting legend, but one must either do that or change the guidebook. Ah, well, it isn't the first sacrifice I've had to make for the sake of history.

Valence has been always a place of culture and educational activity. It was capital of Segalauni before the Romans came, and there was a celebrated school there, even then. This information also came from the guidebook, and it surprised me. It was the first time I had heard that the Segalaunians had a school prior to the Roman conquest. It was also the first time I had heard of the Segalaunians. I thought they were all Gauls and Goths and Vandals up that way, and that their education consisted in learning how to throw a spear convincingly, or to divert one with a rawhide buckler. Now I discov-

ered they had a college before the Romans conquered them. One can hardly blame them for descending upon those Romans later, with fire and sword. Valence shared the usual fate. It was ravished by the so-called barbarians, and later hacked to pieces by Christian kings. To-day again it is a fair city, with parks, wide boulevards, and imposing monuments.

Chapter XIV

INTO THE HILLS

TURNING eastward from Valence, we headed directly for the mountains and entered a land with all the wealth of increase we had found in Provence, and with even more of picturesqueness. The road was still perfect—hard and straight, with an upward incline, but with a grade so gradual and perfect as to be barely noticeable. Indeed, there were times when we seemed actually to be descending, even when the evidence of gravity told us that we were climbing; that is to say, we met water coming toward us—water flowing by the roadside—and more than once Narcissa and I agreed that the said water was running uphill, which was not likely—not in France. Of course, in England, where they turn to the left, it might be expected. The village did not seem quite like those along the Rhone. The streets were as narrow, the people as mildly interested in us, but, on the whole, we thought the general aspect was less ancient, possibly less clean.

But they were interesting. Once we saw a man beating a drum, stopping on every corner to collect a little crowd and read some sort of proclamation, and once by the roadside we met a little negro child in a straw hat and a bright dress, a very bit of the American South. Everywhere were pretty gardens,

along the walls gay flowers, and always the valleys were rich in orchard and vineyard, plumed with tall poplars, divided by bright rivers, and glorified with hazy September sunlight.

We grew friendly with the mountains in the course of the afternoon, then intimate. They sprang up before us and behind us; just across the valleys they towered into the sky. Indeed, we suddenly had a most dramatic proof that we were climbing one. We had been shut in by wooded roads and sheltered farmsteads for an hour or two when we came out again into the open valley, with the river flowing through. But we were no longer *in* the valley! Surprise of surprises! we were on a narrow, lofty road hundreds of feet above it, skirting the mountain-side! It seemed incredible that our gradual, almost imperceptible, ascent had brought us to that high perch, overlooking this marvelous Vale of Cashmere. Everyone has two countries, it is said; his own and France. One could understand that saying here, and why the French are not an emigrating race. We stopped to gaze our fill, and as we went along, the scenery attracted my attention so much that more than once I nearly drove off into it. We were so engrossed by the picture that we took the wrong road and went at least ten miles out of our way to get to Grenoble. But it did not matter; we saw startlingly steep mountainsides that otherwise we might not have seen, and dashing streams, and at the end we had a wild and glorious coast of five or six miles from our mountain fastness down into the valley of the Isère, a regular toboggan streak, both

horns going, nerves taut, teeth set, probable disaster waiting at every turn. We had never done such a thing before, and promised ourselves not to do it again. One such thrill was worth while, perhaps, but the ordinary lifetime might not outlast another.

Down in that evening valley we were in a wonderland. Granite walls rose perpendicularly on our left; cottages nestled in gardens at our right—bloom, foliage, fragrance, the flowing Isère. Surely this was the happy valley, the land of peace and plenty, shut in by these lofty heights from all the troubling of the world. Even the towers and spires of a city that presently began to rise ahead of us did not disturb us. In the evening light they were not real, and when we had entered the gates of ancient Gratianopolis, and crossed the Isère by one of its several bridges, it seemed that this modern Grenoble was not quite a city of the eager world.

The hotel we selected from the red-book was on the outskirts, and we had to draw pretty heavily on our French to find it; but it was worth while, for it was set in a wide garden, and from every window commanded the Alps. We realized now that they *were* the Alps, the Alps of the Savoy, their high green slopes so near that we could hear the tinkle of the goat bells.

We did not take the long drive through the "impossibly beautiful" valleys of Grenoble which we had planned for next morning. When we arose the air was no longer full of stillness and sunlight. In fact, it was beginning to rain. So we stayed in, and by and by for luncheon had all the good French things,

ending with fresh strawberries, great bowls of them —in September—and apparently no novelty in this happy valley of the Isère. All the afternoon, too, it rained, and some noisy French youngsters raced up and down the lower rooms and halls, producing a homelike atmosphere, while we gathered about the tables to study the French papers and magazines.

It was among the advertisements that I made some discoveries about French automobiles. They are more expensive than ours, in proportion to the horsepower, the latter being usually low. About twelve to fifteen horsepower seems to be the strength of the ordinary five-passenger machine. Our own thirty-horsepower engine, which we thought rather light at home, is a giant by comparison. Heavy engines are not needed in France. The smooth roads and perfectly graded hills require not half the power that we must expend on some of our rough, tough, rocky, and steep highways. Again, these lighter engines and cars take less gasoline, certainly, and that is a big item, where gasoline costs at least 100 per cent more than in America. I suppose the lightest weight car consistent with strength and comfort would be the thing to take to Europe. There would be a saving in the gasoline bill; and then the customs deposit, which is figured on the weight, would not be so likely to cripple the owner's bank account.

Chapter XV

UP THE ISÈRE

SOMETIME in the night the rain ceased, and by morning Nature had prepared a surprise for us. The air was crystal clear, and towering into the sky were peaks no longer blue or green or gray, but white with drifted snow! We were in warm, mellow September down in our valley, but just up there—such a little way it seemed—were the drifts of winter. With our glass we could bring them almost within snowballing distance. Feathery clouds drifted among the peaks, the sun shooting through. It was all new to us, and startling. These really were the Alps; there was no further question.

"Few French cities have a finer location than Grenoble," says the guidebook, and if I also have not conveyed this impression I have meant to do so. Not many cities in the world, I imagine, are more picturesquely located. It is also a large city, with a population of more than seventy-five thousand—a city of culture, and it has been important since the beginning of recorded history. Gratian was its patron Roman emperor, and the name Gratianopolis, assumed in his honor, has become the Grenoble of to-day. Gratian lived back in the fourth century and was a capable sort of an emperor, but he had one weak point. He liked to array himself in out-

landish garb and show off. It is a weakness common to many persons, and seems harmless enough, but it was not a healthy thing for Gratian, who did it once too often. He came out one day habited like a Scythian warrior and capered up and down in front of his army. He expected admiration, and probably the title of Scythianus, or something. But the unexpected happened. The army jeered at his antics, and eventually assassinated him. Scythian costumes for emperors are still out of style.

We may pass over the riot and ruin of the Middle Ages. All these towns were alike in that respect. The story of one, with slight alterations, fits them all. Grenoble was the first town to open its gates to Napoleon, on his return from Elba, in 1815, which gives it a kind of distinction in more recent times. Another individual feature is its floods. The Isère occasionally fills its beautiful valley, and fifteen times during the past three centuries Grenoble has been almost swept away. There has been no flood for a long period now, and another is about due. Prudent citizens of Grenoble keep a boat tied in the back yard instead of a dog.

We did not linger in Grenoble. The tomb of Bayard—*sans peur, sans reproche*—is there, in the church of St. André; but we did not learn of this until later. The great sight at Grenoble is its environment—the superlative beauty of its approaches, and its setting—all of which we had seen in the glory of a September afternoon.

There were two roads to Chambéry, one by the Isère, and another through the mountains by way of

Chartreuse which, had its attractions. I always wanted to get some of the ancient nectar at its fountainhead, and the road was put down as "picturesque." But the rains had made the hills slippery; a skidding automobile and old Chartreuse in two colors did not seem a safe combination for a family car. So we took the river route, and I am glad now, for it began raining soon after we started, and we might not have found any comfortable ruined castle to shelter us if we had taken to the woods and hills. As it was, we drove into a great arched entrance, where we were safe and dry, and quite indifferent as to what happened next. We explored the place, and were rather puzzled. It was unlike other castles we have seen. Perhaps it had not been a castle at all, but an immense granary, or brewery, or an ancient fortress. In any case, it was old and massive, and its high main arch afforded us a fine protection.

The shower passed, the sun came out, and sent us on our way. The road was wet, but hard, and not steep. It was a neighborly road, curiously intimate with the wayside life, its domestic geography and economies; there were places where we seemed to be actually in front dooryards.

The weather was not settled; now and then there came a sprinkle, but with our top up we did not mind. It being rather wet for picnicking, we decided that we would lunch at some wayside inn. None appeared, however, and when we came to think about it, we could not remember having anywhere passed such an inn. There were plenty of cafés where one could obtain wines and other beverages, but no food.

In England and New England there are plenty of hostelries along the main roads, but evidently not in France. One must depend on the towns. So we stopped at Challes-les-Eaux, a little way out of Chambéry, a pretty place, where we might have stayed longer if the September days had not been getting few.

Later, at Chambéry, we visited the thirteenth-century château of the Duc de Savoy, which has been rebuilt, and climbed the great square tower which is about all that is left of the original structure, a grand place in its time. We also went into the gothic chapel to see some handsomely carved wainscoting, with a ceiling to match. We were admiring it when the woman who was conducting us explained by signs and a combination of languages that, while the wainscoting was carved, the ceiling was only painted, in imitation. It was certainly marvelous if true, and she looked like an honest woman. But I don't know—I wanted to get up there and feel it.

She was, at any rate, a considerate woman. When I told her in the beginning that we had come to see the Duke of Savoy's old hat, meaning his old castle, she hardly smiled, though Narcissa went into hysterics. It was nothing—even a Frenchman might say "*chapeau*" when he meant "*château*," and, furthermore—but let it go—it isn't important enough to dwell upon. Anything will divert the young.

Speaking of hats, I have not mentioned, I believe, the extra one that we carried in the car. It belonged to the head of the family and when we loaded it (the hat) at Marseilles it was a fresh and rather fluffy bit of finery. There did not seem to be any

good place for it in the heavy baggage, shipped by freight to Switzerland, and decidedly none in the service bags strapped to the running-board. Besides, its owner said she might want to wear it on the way. There was plenty of space for an extra hat in our roomy car, we said, and there did seem to be when we loaded it in, all neatly done up in a trim package.

But it is curious how things jostle about and lose their identity. I never seemed to be able to remember what was in that particular package, and was always mistaking it for other things. When luncheon time came I invariably seized it, expecting some pleasant surprise, only to untie an appetizing, but indigestible, hat. The wrapping began to have a travel-worn look, the package seemed to lose bulk. When we lost the string, at last, we found that we could tie it with a much shorter one; when we lost that, we gave the paper a twist at the ends, which was seldom permanent, especially when violently disturbed. Not a soul in the car that did not at one time or another, feeling something bunchy, give it a kick, only to expose our surplus hat, which always had a helpless, unhappy look that invited pity. No concealment insured safety. Once the Joy was found to have her feet on it. At another time the owner herself was sitting on it. We seldom took it in at night, but once when we did we forgot it, and drove back seven miles to recover. I don't know what finally became of it.

Chapter XVI

INTO THE HAUTE-SAVOIE

IT is a rare and beautiful drive to Aix-les-Bains, and it takes one by Lake Bourget, the shimmering bit of blue water from which Mark Twain set out on his Rhone trip. We got into a street market the moment of our arrival in Aix, a solid swarm of dickering people. In my excitement I let the engine stall, and it seemed we would never get through. Aix did not much interest us, and we pushed on to Annecy with no unnecessary delay, and from Annecy to Thones, a comfortable day's run, including, as it did, a drive about beautiful ancient Annecy, chief city of the Haute-Savoie. We might have stayed longer at Annecy, but the weather had an unsettled look, and there came the feeling that storms and winter were gathering in the mountains and we would better be getting along somewhere else. Also a woman backed her donkey cart into us at Annecy and put another dent in our mudguard, which was somehow discouraging. As it was, we saw the lake, said to be the most beautiful in France, though no more beautiful, I think, than Bourget; an ancient château, now transformed into barracks; the old prison built out in the river; the narrow, ancient streets; and a house with a tablet that states that Jean-Jacques

Rousseau lived there in 1729, and there developed his taste for music.

The Haute-Savoie is that billowy corner of far-eastern France below Lake Geneva—a kind of neutral, no man's territory hemmed by the huge heights of Switzerland and Italy. Leaving Annecy, we followed a picturesque road through a wild, weird land, along gorges and awesome brinks, under a somber sky. At times we seemed to be on the back of the world; at others diving to its recesses. It was the kind of way that one might take to supernatural regions, and it was the kind of evening to start.

Here and there on the slopes were flocks and herds, attended by grave-faced women, who were knitting as they slowly walked. They barely noticed us or their charges. They never sat down, but followed along, knitting, knitting, as though they were patterning the fates of men. Sometimes we met or passed a woman on the road, always knitting, like the others. It was uncanny. Probably for every human being there is somewhere among those dark mountains a weird woman, knitting the pattern of his life. That night at Thones, a forgotten hamlet, lost there in the Haute-Savoie, a storm broke, the wind tore about our little inn, the rain dashed fearsomely, all of which was the work of those knitting women, beyond doubt.

But the sun came up fresh and bright, and we took the road for Geneva. For a time it would be our last day in France. All the forenoon we were among the mountain peaks, skirting precipices that one did not care to look over without holding firmly to some-

thing. But there were no steep grades and the brinks were protected by solid little walls.

At the bottom of a long slope a soldier stepped out of a box of a house and presented arms. I dodged, but his intent was not sanguinary. He wanted to see our papers—we were at the frontier—so I produced our customs receipts, called *triptyques*, our T. C. de F. membership card, our car license, our driving license, and was feeling in my pocket for yet other things when he protested, "*Pas nécessaire, pas nécessaire*," and handed all back but the French *triptyque*, which he took to his *bureau*, where, with two other military *attachés*, he examined, discussed, finally signed and witnessed it, and waved us on our way.

So we were not passing the Swiss customs yet, but only leaving the French outpost. The ordeal of the Swiss *douane* was still somewhere ahead; we had entered the neutral strip. We wished we might reach the Swiss post pretty soon and have the matter over with. We had visions of a fierce person looking us through, while he fired a volley of French questions, pulled our baggage to pieces, and weighed the car, only to find that the result did not tally with the figures on our triple-folded sheet. I had supplied most of those figures from memory, and I doubted their accuracy. I had heard that of all countries except Russia, Switzerland was about the most particular. So we went on and on through that lofty scenery, expecting almost anything at every turn.

But nothing happened—nothing except that at

one place the engine seemed to be running rather poorly. I thought at first that there was some obstruction in the gasoline tube, and my impulse was to light a match and look into the tank to see what it might be. On second thought I concluded to omit the match. I remembered reading of a man who had done that, and almost immediately his heirs had been obliged to get a new car.

We passed villages, but no *douane*. Then all at once we were in the outskirts of a city. Why, this was surely Geneva, and as we were driving leisurely along a fat little man in uniform came out and lifted his hand. We stopped. Here it was, then, at last.

For a moment I felt a slight attack of weakness, not in the heart, but about the knees. However, the little man seemed friendly. He held out his hand and I shook it cordially. But it was the papers he was after, our Swiss *triptyque*. I said to myself, "A minute more and we probably shall be on the scales, and the next in trouble." But he only said, "*Numero de moteur.*" I jerked open the hood, scrubbed off the grease, and showed it to him. He compared it, smiled, and handed back our paper. Then he waved me to a *bureau* across the street. Now it was coming; he had doubtless discovered something wrong at a glance.

There was an efficient-looking, sinister-looking person in the office who took the *triptyque*, glanced at it, and threw something down before me. I thought it was a warrant, but it proved to be a copy of the Swiss law and driving regulations, with a fine

road map of Switzerland, and all information needed by motorists; "Price, 2 Frs." stamped on the cover. I judged that I was required to buy this, but I should have done it, anyway. It was worth the money, and I wished to oblige that man. He accepted my two francs, and I began to feel better. Then he made a few entries in something, handed me my *triptyque*, said "*Bonjour, et bon voyage*," and I was done.

I could hardly believe it. I saw then what a nice face he had, while the little fat man across the street was manifestly a lovely soul. He had demanded not a thing but the number of the motor. Not even the number of the car had interested him. As for the weight, the bore of the cylinders, the number of the chassis, and all those other statistics said to be required, they were as nonexistent to him as to me. Why, he had not even asked us to unstrap our baggage. It was with feelings akin to tenderness that we waved him good-by and glided across the imaginary line of his frontier into Switzerland.

We glided very leisurely, however. "Everybody gets arrested in Switzerland"—every stranger, that is—for breaking the speed laws. This, at least, was our New York information. So we crept along, and I kept my eye on the speedometer all the way through Geneva, for we were not going to stop there at present, and when we had crossed our old friend, the Rhone, variously bridged here, skirted the gay waterfront and were on the shore road of that loveliest of all lakes—Lake Léman, with its blue water, its snow-capped mountains, its terraced vineyards, we

still loafed and watched the *gendarmes* to see if they were timing us, and came almost to a stop whenever an official of any kind hove in sight. Also we used the mellow horn, for our book said that horns of the Klaxon type are not allowed in Switzerland.

We were on soft pedal, you see, and some of the cars we met were equally subdued. But we observed others that were not—cars that were just bowling along in the old-fashioned way, and when these passed us, we were surprised to find that they were not ignorant, strange cars, but Swiss cars, or at least cars with Swiss number-plates and familiar with the dangers. As for the whistles, they were honking and snorting and screeching just as if they were in Connecticut, where there is no known law that forbids anything except fishing on Sunday. Indeed, one of the most sudden and violent horns I have ever heard overtook us just then, and I nearly jumped over the windshield when it abruptly opened on me from behind.

"Good G—, that is, goodness!" I said, "this is just like France!" and I let out a few knots and tooted the Klaxonette, and was doing finely when suddenly a mounted policeman appeared on the curve ahead. I could feel myself scrouging as we passed, going with great deliberation. He did not offer to molest me, but we did not hurry again—not right away. Not that we cared to hurry; the picture landscape we were in was worth all the time one could give it. Still, we were anxious to get to Lausanne before dusk, and little by little we saw and heard things which convinced us that "Everybody gets arrested

in Switzerland" is a superstition, the explosion of which was about due. Fully half the people we met, *all* that passed us, could properly have been arrested anywhere. By the time we reached Lausanne we should have been arrested ourselves.

Chapter XVII

SOME SWISS IMPRESSIONS

NOW, when one has reached Switzerland, his inclination is not to go on traveling, for a time at least, but to linger and enjoy certain advantages. First, of course, there is the scenery; the lakes, the terraced hills, and the snow-capped mountains; the châteaux, chalets, and mossy villages; the old inns and brand-new, heaven-climbing hotels. And then Switzerland is the land of the three F's—French, Food, and Freedom, all attractive things. For Switzerland is the model republic, without graft and without greed; its schools, whether public or private, enjoy the patronage of all civilized lands, and as to the matter of food, Switzerland is the *table d'hôte* of the world.

Swiss landlords are combined into a sort of trust, not, as would be the case elsewhere, to keep prices up, but to keep prices down! It is the result of wisdom, a far-seeing prudence which says: "Our scenery, our climate, our pure water—these are our stock in trade. Our profit from them is through the visitor. Wherefore we will encourage visitors with good food, attractive accommodations, courtesy; and we will be content with small profit from each, thus inviting a general, even if modest, prosperity; also, incidentally, the cheerfulness and good will of

our patrons." It is a policy which calls for careful management, one that has made hotel-keeping in Switzerland an exact science—a gift, in fact, transmitted down the generations, a sort of magic; for nothing short of magic could supply a spotless room, steam heated, with windows opening upon the lake, and three meals—the evening meal a seven-course dinner of the first order—all for six francs fifty (one dollar and thirty cents) a day.[1]

It is a policy which prevails in other directions. Not all things are cheap in Switzerland, but most things are—the things which one buys oftenest—woolen clothing and food. Cotton goods are not cheap, for Switzerland does not grow cotton, and there are a few other such items. Shoes are cheap enough, if one will wear the Swiss make, but few visitors like to view them on their own feet. They enjoy them most when they hear them clattering along on the feet of Swiss children, the wooden soles beating out a rhythmic measure that sounds like a coopers' chorus. Not all Swiss shoes have wooden soles, but the others do not gain grace by their absence.

Swiss cigars are also cheap. I am not a purist in cigars, but at home I have smoked a good many and seldom with safety one that cost less than ten cents, straight. One pays ten centimes, or *two* cents, in Switzerland, and gets a mild, evenly burning article. I judge it is made of tobacco, though the head of the family suggested other things that she thought it smelled like. If she had smoked one of them, she

[1] In 1913–14. The rate to-day is somewhat higher.

would not have noticed this peculiarity any more. Wine is cheap, of course, for the hillsides are covered with vines; also, whisk—but I am wandering into economic statistics without really meaning to do so. They were the first things that impressed me.

The next, I believe, was the lack of Swiss politics. Switzerland is a republic that runs with the exactness of a Swiss watch, its machinery as hermetically concealed. I had heard that the Swiss Republic sets the pattern of government for the world, and I was anxious to know something of its methods and personnel. I was sorry that I was so ignorant. I didn't even know the name of the Swiss President, and for a week was ashamed to confess it. I was hoping I might see it in one of the French papers I puzzled over every evening. But at the end of the week I timidly and apologetically inquired of our friendly landlord as to the name of the Swiss Chief Executive.

But then came a shock. Our landlord grew confused, blushed, and confessed that he didn't know it, either! He had known it, he said, of course, but it had slipped his mind. Slipped his mind! Think of the name of Roosevelt, or Wilson, or Taft slipping the mind of anybody in America—and a landlord! I asked the man who sold me cigars. He had forgotten, too. I asked the apothecary, but got no information. I was not so timid after that. I asked a fellow passenger—guest, I mean, an American, but of long Swiss residence—and got this story. I believe most of it. He said:

"When I came to Switzerland and found out what a wonderful little country it was, its government so

economical, so free from party corruption and spoils, from graft and politics, so different from the home life of our own dear Columbia, I thought, 'The man at the head of this thing must be a master hand; I'll find out his name.' So I picked out a bright-looking subject, and said:

"'What is the name of the Swiss President?'

"He tried to pretend he didn't understand my French, but he did, for I can tear the language off all right—learned it studying art in Paris. When I pinned him down, he said he knew the name well enough, *parfaitement*, but couldn't think of it at that moment.

"That was a surprise, but I asked the next man. He couldn't think of it, either. Then I asked a police officer. Of course he knew it, all right; '*oh oui, certainement, mais*'—then he scratched his head and scowled, but he couldn't dig up that name. He was just a plain prevaricator—*toute simplement*—like the others. I asked every man I met, and every one of them knew it, had it right on the end of his tongue; but somehow it seemed to stick there. Not a man in Vevey or Montreux could tell me the name of the Swiss President. It was the same in Fribourg, the same even in Berne, the capital. I had about given it up when one evening, there in Berne, I noticed a sturdy man with an honest face, approaching. He looked intelligent, too, and as a last resort I said:

"'Could you, by any chance, tell me the name of the Swiss President?'

"The effect was startling. He seized me by the

arm and, after looking up and down the street, leaned forward and whispered in my ear:

"'*Mon Dieu! c'est moi!* I am the Swiss President; but—ah *non*, don't tell anyone! I am the only man in Switzerland who knows it!'

"You see," my friend continued, "he is elected privately, no torchlight campaigns, no scandal, and only for a year. He is only a sort of chairman, though of course his work is important, and the present able incumbent has been elected a number of times. His name is—is—is—ah yes, that's my tram. So sorry to have to hurry away. See you to-night at dinner."

One sees a good many nationalities in Switzerland, and some of them I soon learned to distinguish. When I saw a man with a dinky Panama hat pulled down about his face, and wearing a big black mustache or beard, I knew he was a Frenchman. When I met a stout, red-faced man, with a pack on his back and with hobnailed shoes, short trousers, and a little felt hat with a feather stuck in it, I knew him for a German. When I noticed a very carefully dressed person, with correct costume and gaiters—also monocle, if perfect—saying, "Aw—Swiss people—so queah, don't you know," I was pretty sure he was an Englishman. When I remarked a tall, limber person, carrying a copy of the Paris *Herald* and asking every other person he met, "Hey, there! Vooly voo mir please sagen—" all the rest incomprehensible, I knew him for an American of the deepest dye. The Swiss themselves have no such distinguishing mark. They are just sturdy, plainly dressed, unpretentious

people, polite and friendly, with a look of capability, cleanliness, and honesty which invites confidence.

An Englishwoman said to me:

"I have heard that the Swiss are the best governed and the least intelligent people in the world."

I reflected on this. It had a snappy sound, but it somehow did not seem to be firm at the joints. "The best governed and the least intelligent"—there was something drunken about it. I said:

"It doesn't quite seem to fit. And how about the magnificent Swiss public-school system, and the manufacturing, and the national railway, with all the splendid engineering that goes with the building of the funiculars and tunnels? And the Swiss prosperity, and the medical practice, and the sciences? I always imagined those things were in some way connected with intelligence."

"Oh, well," she said, "I suppose they do go with intelligence of a kind; but then, of course, you know what I mean."

But I was somehow too dull for her epigram. It didn't seem to have any sense in it. She was a grass widow and I think she made it herself. Later she asked me whereabouts in America I came from. When I said Connecticut, she asked if Connecticut was as big as Lausanne. A woman like that ought to go out of the epigram business.[1]

As a matter of fact, a good many foreigners are inclined to say rather peevish things about sturdy

[1] I have thought since that she may have meant that the Swiss do not lead the world in the art and literary industries. She *may* have connected those things with intelligence—you never can tell.

little, thriving little, happy little Switzerland. I rather suspect they are a bit jealous of the pocket-de-luxe nation that shelters them, and feeds them, and entertains them, and cures them, cheaper and better and kindlier than their home countries. They are willing to enjoy these advantages, but they acknowledge rather grudgingly that Switzerland, without a great standing army, a horde of grafters, or a regiment of tariff millionaires to support, can give lessons in national housekeeping to their own larger, more pretentious lands.

I would not leave the impression, by the way, that the Swiss are invariably prosperous. Indeed, some of them along the lake must have been very poor just then, for the grape crop had failed two years in succession, and with many of them their vineyard is their all. But there was no outward destitution, no rags, no dirt, no begging. Whatever his privation, the Swiss does not wear his poverty on his sleeve.

Switzerland has two other official languages besides French—German and Italian. Government documents, even the postal cards, are printed in these three languages. It would seem a small country for three well-developed tongues, besides all the canton dialects, some of which go back to the old Romanic, and are quite distinct from anything modern. The French, German, and Italian divisions are geographical, the lines of separation pretty distinct. There is rivalry among the cantons, a healthy rivalry, in matters of progress and education. The cantons are sufficiently a unit on all national questions, and together they form about as compact and sturdy a

little nation as the world has yet seen—a nation the size and shape of an English walnut, and a hard nut for any would-be aggressor to crack. There are not many entrances into Switzerland, and they would be very well defended. The standing army is small, but every Swiss is subject to a call to arms, and is trained by enforced, though brief, service to their use. He seems by nature to be handy with a rifle, and never allows himself to be out of practice. There are regular practice meets every Sunday, and I am told the government supplies the cartridges. Boys organize little companies and regiments and this the government also encourages. It is said that Switzerland could put half a million soldiers in the field, and that every one would be a crack shot.[1] The German Kaiser, once reviewing the Swiss troops, remarked, casually, to a sub-officer, "You say you could muster half a million soldiers?"

"Yes, Your Majesty."

"And suppose I should send a million of my soldiers against you. What would you do then?"

"We should fire two shots apiece, Your Majesty."

In every Swiss town there are regular market days, important events where one may profitably observe the people. The sale of vegetables and flowers must support many families. In each town there is an open square, which twice a week is picturesquely crowded, and there one may buy everything to eat and many things to wear; also, the wherewith to improve the home, the garden, and even the mind;

[1] When the call to arms came, August 1, 1914, Switzerland put 250,000 men on her frontier in twenty-four hours.

MARCHÉ VEVEY

"In Each Town There Is an Open Square, Which Twice a Week Is Picturesquely Crowded"

for besides the garden things there are stalls of second-hand books, hardware, furniture, and general knick-knacks. Flanking the streets are displays of ribbons, laces, hats, knitted things, and general dry-goods miscellany; also antiques, the scrapings of many a Swiss cupboard and corner.

But it is in the open square itself that the greater market blooms—really blooms, for, in season, the vegetables are truly floral in their rich vigor, and among them are pots and bouquets of the posies that the Swiss, like all Europeans, so dearly love. Most of the flower and vegetable displays are down on the ground, arranged in baskets or on bits of paper, and form a succession of gay little gardens, ranged in long narrow avenues of color and movement, a picture of which we do not grow weary. Nor of the setting—the quaint tile-roofed buildings; the blue lake, with its sails and swans and throng of wheeling gulls; the green hills; the lofty snow-capped mountains that look down from every side. How many sights those ancient peaks have seen on this same square!—markets and military, battles and buffoonery. There are no battles to-day, but the Swiss cadets use it for a drill ground, and every little while lightsome shows and merry-go-rounds establish themselves in one end of it, and the little people skip about, and go riding around and around to the latest ragtime, while the mountains look down with their large complaisance, just as they watched the capering ancestors of these small people, ages and ages ago; just as they will watch their light-footed descendants for a million years, maybe.

The market is not confined entirely to the square. On its greater days, when many loads of wood and hay crowd one side of it, it overflows into the streets. Around a floral fountain may be found butter, eggs, and cheese—oh, especially cheese, the cheese of Gruyère, with every size and pattern of holes, in any quantity, cut and weighed by a handsome apple-faced woman who seems the living embodiment of the cheese industry. I have heard it said—this was in America—that the one thing not to be obtained in Switzerland is Swiss cheese. The person who conceived that smartness belongs with the one who invented the "intelligence" epigram.

On the market days before Christmas our square had a different look. The little displays were full of greenery, and in the center of the market place there had sprung up a forest of Christmas trees. They were not in heaps, lying flat; but each, mounted on a neat tripod stand, stood upright, as if planted there. They made a veritable Santa Claus forest, and the gayly dressed young people walking among them, looking and selecting, added to this pretty sight.

The Swiss make much of Christmas. Their shop windows are overflowing with decorations and attractive things. Vevey is "Chocolate Town." Most of the great chocolate factories of Europe are there, and at all holiday seasons the grocery and confectionary windows bear special evidence of this industry. Chocolate Santa Clauses—very large—chickens, rabbits, and the like—life size; also trees, groups, set pieces, ornaments—the windows are wildernesses of

the rich brown confection, all so skillfully modeled and arranged.

The toy windows, too, are fascinating. You would know at once that you were looking into a Swiss toy window, from the variety of carved bears; also, from the toy châteaux—very fine and large, with walled courts, portcullises, and battlements—with which the little Swiss lad plays war. The dolls are different, too, and the toy books—all in French. But none of these things were as interesting as the children standing outside, pointing at them and discussing them—so easily, so glibly—in French. How little they guessed my envy of them—how gladly I would buy out that toy window for, say, seven dollars, and trade it to them for their glib unconsciousness of gender and number and case.

On the afternoon before Christmas the bells began. From the high mountain-sides, out of deep ravines that led back into the hinterland, came the ringing. The hills seemed full of bells—a sound that must go echoing from range to range, to the north and to the south, traveling across Europe with the afternoon. Then, on Christmas Day, the trees. In every home and school and hotel they sparkled. We attended four in the course of the day, one, a very gorgeous one in the lofty festooned hall of a truly grand hotel, with tea served and soft music stealing from some concealed place—a slow strain of the "Tannenbaum," which is like our "Maryland," only more beautiful—and seemed to come from a source celestial. And when one remembered that in every corner of Europe

something of the kind was going on, and that it was all done in memory and in honor of One who, along dusty roadsides and in waste places, taught the doctrine of humility, one wondered if the world might not be worth saving, after all.

Chapter XVIII

THE LITTLE TOWN OF VEVEY

IT would seem to be the French cantons along the Lake of Geneva (or Léman) that most attract the deliberate traveler. The north shore of this lake is called the Swiss Riviera, for it has a short, mild winter, with quick access to the mountaintops. But perhaps it is the schools, the *pensionnats*, that hold the greater number. The whole shore of the Lake of Geneva is lined with them, and they are filled with young persons of all ages and nations, who are there mainly to learn French, though incidentally, through that lingual medium, other knowledge is acquired. Some, indeed, attend the fine public schools, where the drill is very thorough, even severe. Parents, as well as children, generally attend school in Switzerland—visiting parents, I mean. They undertake French, which is the thing to do, like mountain climbing and winter sports. Some buy books and seclude their struggles; others have private lessons; still others openly attend one of the grown-up language schools, or try to find board at French-speaking *pensions*. Their progress and efforts form the main topic of conversation. In a way it makes for a renewal of youth.

We had rested at Vevey, that quiet, clean little picture-city, not so busy and big as Lausanne, or so

grand and stylish as Montreux, but more peaceful than either, and, being more level, better adapted for motor headquarters. Off the main street at Montreux, the back or the front part of a car is always up in the air, and it has to be chained to the garage. We found a level garage in Vevey, and picked out *pensionnats* for Narcissa and the Joy, and satisfactory quarters for ourselves. Though still warm and summer-like, it was already late autumn by the calendar, and not a time for long motor adventures. We would see what a Swiss winter was like. We would wrestle with the French idiom. We would spend the months face to face with the lake, the high-perched hotels and villages, the snow-capped, cloud-capped hills.

Probably everybody has heard of Vevey, but perhaps there are still some who do not know it by heart, and will be glad of a word or two of details. Vevey has been a place of habitation for a long time. A wandering Asian tribe once came down that way, rested a hundred years or so along the Léman shore, then went drifting up the Rhone and across the Simplon to make trouble for Rome. But perhaps there was no Rome then; it was a long time ago, and it did not leave any dates, only a few bronze implements and trifles to show the track of the storm. The Helvetians came then, sturdy and warlike, and then the Romans, who may have preserved traditions of the pleasant land from that first wandering tribe.

Cæsar came marching down the Rhone and along this waterside, and his followers camped in the Vevey

neighborhood a good while—about four centuries, some say. Certain rich Romans built their summer villas in Switzerland, and the lake shore must have had its share. But if there were any at Vevey, there is no very positive trace of them now. In the depths of the Castle of Chillon, they show you Roman construction in the foundations, but that may have been a fortress.

I am forgetting, however. One day, when we had been there a month or two, and were clawing up the steep hill—Mount Pelerin—that rises back of the hotel to yet other hotels, and to compact little villages, we strayed into a tiny lane just below Chardonne, and came to a stone watering trough, or fountain, under an enormous tree. Such troughs, with their clear, flowing water, are plentiful enough, but this one had a feature all its own. The stone upright which held the flowing spout had not been designed for that special purpose. It was, in fact, the upper part of a small column, capital and all, very old and mended, and *distinctly of Roman design.* I do not know where it came from, and I do not care to inquire too deeply, for I like to think it is a fragment of one of those villas that overlooked the Lake of Geneva long ago.

There are villas enough about the lake to-day, and châteaux by the dozen, most of the latter begun in the truculent Middle Ages and continued through the centuries down to within a hundred years or so ago. You cannot walk or drive in any direction without coming to them, some in ruins, but most of them well preserved or carefully restored, and habit-

able; some, like beautiful Blonay, holding descendants of their ancient owners. From the top of our hotel, with a glass, one could pick out as many as half a dozen, possibly twice that number. They were just towers of defense originally, the wings and other architectural excursions being added as peace and prosperity and family life increased. One very old and handsome one, la Tour de Peilz, now gives its name to a part of Vevey, though in the old days it is said that venomous little wars used to rage between Vevey proper and the village which clustered about the château de Peilz. Readers of *Little Women* will remember la Tour de Peilz, for it was along its lake wall that Laurie proposed to Amy.

But a little way down the lake there is a more celebrated château than la Tour de Peilz; the château of Chillon, which Byron's poem of the prisoner Bonivard has made familiar for a hundred years.[1] Chillon, which stands not exactly on the lake, but on a rock *in* the lake, has not preserved the beginning of its history. Those men of the bronze age camped there, and, if the evidences shown are genuine, the Romans built a part of the foundation. Also, in one of its lower recesses there are the remains of a rude altar of sacrifice.

It is a fascinating place. You cross a little drawbridge, and through a heavy gateway enter a guardroom and pass to a pretty open court, where to-day there are vines and blooming flowers. Then you descend to the big barrack room, a hall of ponderous masonry, pass through a small room, with its per-

[1] Written at the Anchor Inn, Ouchy, Lausanne, in 1817.

fectly black cell below for the condemned, through another, where a high gibbet-beam still remains, and into a spacious corridor of pillars called now the "Prison of Bonivard."

> There are seven pillars of gothic mold
> In Chillon's dungeons deep and old; . . .
> Dim with a dull imprisoned ray,
> A sunbeam which has lost its way . . .
> And in each pillar there is a ring
> And in each ring there is a chain.
> That iron is a cankering thing,
> For in these limbs its teeth remain. . . .

Bonivard's ring is still there, and the rings of his two brothers who were chained, one on each side of him; chained, as he tells us, so rigidly that

> We could not move a single pace;
> We could not see each other's face.

We happened to be there, once, when a sunbeam that "had lost its way" came straying in, a larger sunbeam now, for the narrow slits that serve for windows were even narrower in Bonivard's time, and the place, light enough to-day in pleasant weather, was then somber, damp, and probably unclean.

Bonivard was a Geneva patriot, a political prisoner of the Duke of Savoy, who used Chillon as his château. Bonivard lived six years in Chillon, most of the time chained to a column, barely able to move, having for recreation shrieks from the torture chamber above, or the bustle of execution from the small adjoining cell. How he lived, how his reason survived, are

things not to be understood. Both his brothers died, and at last Bonivard was allowed more liberty. The poem tells us that he made a footing in the wall, and climbed up to look out on the mountains and blue water, and a little island of three trees, and the "white-walled distant town"—Bouveret, across the lake. He was delivered by the Bernese in 1536, regaining his freedom with a sigh, according to the poem. Yet he survived many years, dying in 1570, at the age of seventy-four.

On the columns in Bonivard's dungeon many names are carved, some of them the greatest in modern literary history. Byron's is there, Victor Hugo's, Shelley's, and others of the sort. They are a tribute to the place and its history, of course, but even more to Bonivard—the Bonivard of Byron.

Prisoners of many kinds have lived and died in the dungeons of Chillon—heretics, witches, traitors, poor relations—persons inconvenient for one reason or another—it was a vanishing point for the duke's undesirables, who, after the execution, were weighted and dropped out a little door that opens directly to an almost measureless depth of blue uncomplaining water. Right overhead is the torture chamber, with something ghastly in its very shape and color, the central post still bearing marks of burning-irons and clawing steel. Next to this chamber is the hall of justice, and then the splendid banquet hall; everything handy, you see, so that when the duke had friends, and the wine had been good, and he was feeling particularly well, he could say, "Let's go in and torture a witch"; or, if the hour was late and

time limited, "Now we'll just step down and hang a heretic to go to bed on." The duke's bedroom, by the way, was right over the torture chamber. I would give something for that man's conscience.

One might go on for pages about Chillon, but it has been told in detail so many times. It is the pride to-day of this shore—pictures of it are in every window—postal cards of it abound. Yet, somehow one never grows tired of it, and stops to look at every new one.

For a thousand years, at least, Chillon was the scene of all the phases of feudalism and chivalry; its history is that of the typical castle; architecturally it is probably as good an example as there is in Switzerland. It has been celebrated by other authors besides Byron. Jean Jacques Rousseau has it in his *Nouvelle Héloïse*, Hugo in *Le Rhin*, and it has been pictured more or less by most of the writing people who have found their way to Léman's pleasant shore. These have been legion. The Vevey and Montreux neighborhood has been always a place for poor but honest authors. Rousseau was at Vevey in 1732, and lodged at the Hotel of the Key, and wrote of it in his *Confessions*, though he would seem to have behaved very well there. The building still stands, and bears a tablet with a medallion portrait of Rousseau and an extract in which he says that Vevey has won his heart. In his *Confessions* he advises all persons of taste to go to Vevey, and speaks of the beauty and majesty of the spectacle from its shore.

When Lord Byron visited Lake Léman he lodged

in Clarens, between Vevey and Montreux, and a tablet now identifies the house. Voltaire also visited here, lodging unknown. Dumas the elder was in Vevey in the thirties of the last century, and wrote a book about Switzerland—a book of extraordinary interest, full of duels, earthquakes, and other startling things, worthy of the author of *Monte Cristo* and *The Three Musketeers*. Switzerland was not so closely reported in those days; an imagination like Dumas' had more range. Thackeray wrote a portion of the *Newcomes* at the hotel Trois Couronnes in Vevey, and it was on the wide terrace of the same gay hostelry that Henry James's *Daisy Miller* had her parasol scene. We have already mentioned Laurie and Amy on the wall of Tour de Peilz, and one might go on citing literary associations of this neighborhood. Perhaps it would be easier to say that about every author who has visited the continent has paused for a little time at Vevey, a statement which would apply to travelers in general.

Vevey is not a great city; it is only a picturesque city, with curious, winding streets of constantly varying widths, and irregular little open spaces, all very clean, also very misleading when one wishes to go anywhere with direction and dispatch. You give that up, presently. You do not try to save time by cutting through. When you do, you arrive in some new little rectangle or confluence, with a floral fountain in the middle, and neat little streets winding away to nowhere in particular; then all at once you are back where you started. In this, as in some other points of resemblance, Vevey might be called

the Boston of Switzerland. Not that I pretend to a familiarity with Boston—nobody has that—but I have an aunt who lives there, and every time I go to see her I am obliged to start in a different direction for her house, though she claims to have been living in the same place for thirty years. Some people think Boston is built on a turn-table. I don't know; it sounds reasonable.

To come back to Vevey—it is growing—not in the wild, woolly, New York, Chicago, and Western way, but in a very definite and substantial way. They are building new houses for business and residence, solid structures of stone and cement, built, like the old ones, to withstand time. They do not build flimsy fire-traps in Switzerland. Whatever the class of the building, the roofs are tile, the staircases are stone. We always seem to court destruction in our American residential architecture. We cover our roofs with inflammable shingles to invite every spark, and build our stairways of nice dry pine, so that in the event of fire they will be the first thing to go. This encourages practice in jumping out of top-story windows.

By day Vevey is a busy, prosperous-looking, though unhurried, place, its water-front gay with visitors; evening comes and glorifies the lake into wine, turns to rose the snow on *Grammont*, the *Dents de Midi*, and the *Dents de Morcles*. As to the sunset itself, not many try to paint it any more. Once, from our little balcony we saw a monoplane pass up the lake and float into the crimson west, like a great moth or bird. Night in Vevey is full of light and

movement, but not of noise. There is no wild clatter of voices and outbursts of nothing in particular, such as characterize the towns of Italy and southern France. On the hilltops back of Vevey the big hotels are lighted, and sometimes, following the dimmer streets, we looked up to what is apparently a city in the sky, suggesting one's old idea of the New Jerusalem, a kind of vision of heaven, as it were—heaven at night, I mean.

Chapter XIX

MASHING A MUD GUARD

ONE does not motor a great deal in the immediate vicinity of Vevey; the hills are not far enough away for that. One may make short trips to Blonay, and even up Pelerin, if he is fond of stiff climbing, and there are wandering little roads that thread cozy orchard lands and lead to secluded villages tucked away in what seem forgotten corners of a bygone time. But the highway skirts the lake-front and leads straight away toward Geneva, or up the Rhone Valley past Martigny toward the Simplon Pass. It has always been a road, and in its time has been followed by some of the greatest armies the world has ever seen—the troops of Cæsar, of Charlemagne, of Napoleon.

We were not to be without our own experience in motor mountain climbing. We did not want it or invite it; it was thrust upon us. We were returning from Martigny late one Sunday afternoon, expecting to reach Vevey for dinner. It was pleasant and we did not hurry. We could not, in fact, for below Villeneuve we fell in with the homing cows, and traveled with attending herds—beside us, before us, behind us—fat, sleek, handsome animals, an escort which did not permit of haste. Perhaps it was avoiding them that caused our mistake; at any

rate, we began to realize presently that we were not on our old road. Still, we seemed headed in the right direction and we kept on. Then presently we were climbing a hill—climbing by a narrow road, one that did not permit of turning around.

Very well, we said, it could not be very high or steep; we would go over the hill. But that was a wrong estimate. The hill was high and it was steep. Up and up and up on second speed, then back to first, until we were getting on a level with the clouds themselves. It was a good road of its kind, but it had no end. The water was boiling in the radiator —boiling over. We must stop to reduce temperature a little and to make inquiries. It was getting late—far too late to attempt an ascension of the Alps.

We were on a sort of bend, and there was a peasant chalet a few rods ahead. I went up there, and from a little old woman in short skirts got a tub of cool water, also some information. The water cooled off our engine, and the information our enthusiasm for further travel in that direction. We were on the road to Château d'Oex, a hilltop resort for winter sports.

We were not in a good place to turn around, there on the edge of a semi-precipice, but we managed to do it, and started back. It was a steep descent. I cut off the spark and put the engine on low speed, which made it serve as a brake, but it required the foot and emergency brake besides. It would have been a poor place to let the car get away. Then I began to worry for fear the hind wheels were sliding, which would quickly cut through the tires. I don't

know why I thought I could see them, for mud guards make that quite impossible. Nevertheless I leaned out and looked back. It was a poor place to do that, too. We were hugging a wall as it was, and one does not steer well looking backward. In five seconds we gouged into the wall, and the front guard on that side crumpled up like a piece of tinfoil. I had to get out and pull and haul it before there was room for the wheel to turn.

I never felt so in disgrace in my life. I couldn't look at anything but the disfigured guard all the way down the mountain. The passengers were sorry and tried to say comforting things, but that guard was fairly shrieking its reproach. What a thing to go home with! I felt that I could never live it down.

Happily it was dark by the time we found the right road and were drawing into Montreux—dark and raining. I was glad it was dark, but the rain did not help, and I should have been happier if the streets had not been full of dodging pedestrians and vehicles and blinding lights. The streets of Montreux are narrow enough at best, and what with a busy tram and all the rest of the medley, driving, for a man already in disgrace, was not real recreation. A railway train passed us just below, and I envied the engineer his clear right of way and fenced track, and decided that his job was an easy one by comparison. One used to hear a good deal about the dangers of engine driving, and no doubt an engineer would be glad to turn to the right or left now and then when meeting a train head on—a thing, however, not likely to happen often, though I suppose once is about

enough. All the same, a straight, fenced and more or less exclusive track has advantages, and I wished I had one, plunging, weaving, diving through the rain as we were, among pedestrians, cyclists, trams, carriages, other motors, and the like; misled by the cross lights from the shops, dazzled by oncoming headlights, blinded by rain splashing in one's face.

It is no great distance from Montreux to Vevey, but in that night it seemed interminable. And what a relief at last were Vevey's quiet streets, what a path of peace the semi-private road to the hotel, what a haven of bliss the seclusion of the solid little garage! Next morning before anybody was astir I got the car with that maltreated mud guard to the shop. It was an awful-looking thing. It had a real expression. It looked as if it were going to cry. I told the repair man that the roads had been wet and the car had skidded into a wall. He did not care how it happened, of course, but I did; besides, it was easier to explain it that way in French.

It took a week to repair the guard. I suppose they had to straighten it out with a steam roller. I don't know, but it looked new and fine when it came back, and I felt better. The bill was sixteen francs. I never got so much disgrace before at such a reasonable figure.

Chapter XX

JUST FRENCH—THAT'S ALL

PERHAPS one should report progress in learning French. Of course Narcissa and the Joy were chattering it in a little while. That is the way of childhood. It gives no serious consideration to a great matter like that, but just lightly accepts it like a new game or toy and plays with it about as readily. It is quite different with a thoughtful person of years and experience. In such case there is need of system and strategy. I selected different points of assault and began the attack from all of them at once—private lessons; public practice; daily grammar, writing and reading in seclusion; readings aloud by persons of patience and pronunciation.

I hear of persons picking up a language—grown persons, I mean—but if there are such persons they are not of my species. The only sort of picking up I do is the kind that goes with a shovel. I am obliged to excavate a language—to loosen up its materials, then hoist them with a derrick. My progress is geological and unhurried. Still, I made progress, of a kind, and after putting in five hours a day for a period of months I began to have a sense of results. I began to realize that even in a rapid-fire conversation the sounds were not all exactly alike, and to distinguish scraps of meaning in conversations not

aimed directly at me, with hard and painful distinctness. I began even to catch things from persons passing on the street—to distinguish French from patois—that is to say, I knew, when I understood any of it, that it was not patois. I began to be proud and to take on airs—always a dangerous thing.

One day at the pharmacy I heard two well-dressed men speaking. I listened intently, but could not catch a word. When they went I said to the drug clerk—an Englishman who spoke French:

"Strange that those well-dressed men should use patois."

He said: "Ah, but that was not patois—that was very choice French—Parisian."

I followed those men the rest of the afternoon, at a safe distance, but in earshot, and we thus visited in company most of the shops and sights of Vevey. If I could have followed them for a few months in that way it is possible—not likely, but possible—that their conversation might have meant something to me.

Which, by the way, suggests the chief difference between an acquired and an inherited language. An acquired language, in time, comes to *mean* something, whereas the inherited language *is* something. It is bred into the fiber of its possessor. It is not a question of considering the meaning of words—what they convey; they do not come stumbling through any anteroom of thought, they are embodied facts, forms, sentiments, leaping from one inner consciousness to another, instantaneously and without friction. Probably every species of animation, from

the atom to the elephant, has a language—perfectly understood and sufficient to its needs—some system of signs, or sniffs, or grunts, or barks, or vibrations to convey quite as adequately as human speech the necessary facts and conditions of life. Persons, wise and otherwise, will tell you that animals have no language; but when a dog can learn even many words of his master's tongue, it seems rather unkind to deny to him one of his own. Because the oyster does not go shouting around, or annoy us with his twaddle, does not mean that he is deprived of life's lingual interchanges. It is not well to deny speech to the mute, inglorious mollusk. Remember he is our ancestor.

To go back to French: I have acquired, with time and heavy effort, a sort of next-room understanding of that graceful speech—that is to say, it is about like English spoken by some one beyond a partition—a fairly thick one. By listening closely I get the general drift of conversation—a confusing drift sometimes, mismeanings that generally go with eavesdropping. At times, however, the partition seems to be thinner, and there comes the feeling that if somebody would just come along and open a door between I should understand.

It is truly a graceful speech—the French tongue. Plain, homely things of life—so bald, and bare, and disheartening in the Anglo-Saxon—are less unlovely in the French. Indeed, the French word for "rags" is so pretty that we have conferred "chiffon" on one of our daintiest fabrics. But in the grace of the language lies also its weakness. It does not rise to

the supreme utterances. I have been reading the bible texts on the tombstones in the little cemetery of Chardonne. "*L'éternel est mon berger*," can hardly rank in loftiness with "The Lord is my shepherd," nor "*Que votre cœur ne se trouble point*" with "Let not your heart be troubled." Or, at any, rate I can never bring myself to think so.

Any language is hard enough to learn—bristling with difficulties which seem needless, even offensively silly to the student. We complain of the genders and silent letters of the French, but when one's native tongue spells "cough" and calls it "cof," "rough" and calls it "ruff," "slough" and calls it "slu" or "sluff," by choice, and "plough" and is unable to indicate adequately without signs just how it should be pronounced, he is not in a position to make invidious comparisons. I wonder what a French student really thinks of those words. He has rules for his own sound variations, and carefully indicates them with little signs. We have sound signs, too, but an English page printed with all the necessary marks is a cause for anguish. I was once given a primary reader printed in that way, and at sight of it ran screaming to my mother. So we leave off all signs in English and trust in God for results. It is hard to be an American learning French, but I would rather be that than a Frenchman learning American.

Chapter XXI

WE LUGE

WHEN winter comes in America, with a proper and sufficient thickness of ice, a number of persons—mainly young people—go out skating, or coasting, or sleighing, and have a very good time. But this interest is incidental—it does not exclude all other interests—it does not even provide the main topic of conversation.

It is not like that in Switzerland. Winter sport is a religion in Switzerland; the very words send a thrill through the dweller—native or foreign—among the Swiss hills. When the season of white drift and congealed lake takes possession of the land, other interests and industries are put aside for the diversions of winter.

Everything is subserved to the winter sports. French, German, and English papers report each day the thickness of snow at the various resorts, the conditions of the various courses, the program of events. Bills at the railway stations announce the names of points where the sports are in progress, with a schedule of the fares. Hotels publish their winter attractions—their coasting (they call it "luging"—soft g), curling, skating, ski-ing accommodations, and incidentally mention their rooms. They

also cover their hall carpetings with canvas to protect them from the lugers' ponderous hobnailed shoes. To be truly sporty one must wear those shoes; also certain other trimmings, such as leggings, breeches, properly cut coat, cap and scarf to match. One cannot really enjoy the winter sports without these decorations, or keep in good winter society. Then there are the skis. One must carry a pair of skis to be complete. They must be as tall as the owner can reach, and when he puts them on his legs will branch out and act independently, each on its own account, and he will become a house divided against itself, with the usual results. So it is better to carry them, and look handsome and graceful, and to confine one's real activities to the more familiar things.

Our hotel was divided on winter sports. Not all went in for it, but those who did went in considerably. We had a Dutch family from Sumatra, where they had been tobacco planting for a number of years, and in that tropic land had missed the white robust joys of the long frost. They were a young, superb couple, but their children, who had never known the cold, were slender products of an enervating land. They had never seen snow and they shared their parents' enthusiasm in the winter prospect. The white drifts on the mountaintops made them marvel; the first light fall we had made them wild.

That Dutch family went in for the winter sports. You never saw anything like it. Their plans and their outfit became the chief interest of the hotel. They engaged far in advance their rooms at Château

d'Oex, one of the best known resorts, and they daily accumulated new and startling articles of costume to make their experience more perfect. One day they would all have new shoes of wonderful thickness and astonishing nails. Then it would be gorgeous new scarfs and caps, then sweaters, then skates, then snowshoes, then skis, and so on down the list. Sometimes they would organize a drill in full uniform. But the children were less enthusiastic then. Those slim-legged little folks could hardly walk, weighted with several pounds of heavy hobnailed shoes, and they complained bitterly at this requirement. Their parents did not miss the humor of the situation, and I think enjoyed these preparations and incidental discomforts for the sake of pleasure as much as they could have enjoyed the sports themselves, when the time came. We gave them a hearty send-off, when reports arrived that the snow conditions at Château d'Oex were good, and if they had as good a time as we wished them, and as they gave us in their preparations, they had nothing to regret.

As the winter deepened the winter sport sentiment grew in our midst, until finally in January we got a taste of it ourselves. We found that we could take a little mountain road to a point in the hills called Les Avants, then a funicular to a still higher point, and thus be in the white whirl for better or worse, without being distinctly of it, so to speak. We could not be of it, of course, without the costumes, and we did not see how we could afford these and also certain new adjuncts which the car would need in the spring. So we went primarily as spectators—that is, the older

half of the family. The children had their own winter sports at school.

We telephoned to the Son Loup hotel at the top of the last funicular, and got an early start. You can see Son Loup from the hotel steps in Vevey, but it takes hours to get to it. The train goes up, and up, along gorges and abysses, where one looks down on the tops of Christmas trees, gloriously mantled in snow. Then by and by you are at Les Avants and in the midst of everything, except the ski-ing, which is still higher up, at Son Loup.

We got off at Les Avants and picked our way across the main street among flying sleds of every pattern, from the single, sturdy little bulldog *luge* to the great polly-straddle bob, and from the safe vantage of a café window observed the slide.

It was divided into three parts—one track for bob-sledders—the wild riders—a track for the more daring single riders, and a track for fat folks, old folks, and children. Certainly they were having a good time. Their ages ranged from five to seventy-five, and they were all children together. Now and then there came gliding down among them a big native sled, loaded with hay or wood, from somewhere far up in the hills. It was a perfect day—no cold, no wind, no bright sun, for in reality we were up in the clouds —a soft white veil of vapor was everywhere.

By and by we crossed the track, entered a wonderful snow garden belonging to a hotel, and came to a little pond where some old men and fat men were curling. Curling is a game where you try to drive a sort of stone decoy duck from one end of the

"You Can See Son Loup from the Hotel Steps in Vevey, but It Takes Hours to Get to It"

pond to the other and make it stop somewhere and count something. Each man is armed with a big broom to keep the ice clean before and after his little duck. We watched them a good while and I cannot imagine anything more impressive than to see a fat old man with a broom padding and puffing along by the side of his little fat stone duck, feverishly sweeping the snow away in front of it, so that it will get somewhere and count. When I inadvertently laughed I could see that I was not popular. All were English there—all but a few Americans who pretended to be English.

Beyond the curling pond was a skating pond, part of it given over to an international hockey match, but somehow these things did not excite us. We went back to our café corner to watch the luging and to have luncheon. Then the lugers came stamping in for refreshments, and their costumes interested us. Especially their shoes. Even the Dutch family had brought home no such wonders as some of these. They were of appalling size, and some of them had heavy iron claws or toes such as one might imagine would belong to some infernal race. These, of course, were to dig into the snow behind, to check or guide the flying sled. They were useful, no doubt, but when one saw them on the feet of a tall, slim girl the effect was peculiar.

By the time we had finished luncheon we had grown brave. We said we would luge—modestly, but with proper spirit. There were sleds to let, by an old Frenchman, at a little booth across the way, and we looked over his assortment and picked a small bob

with a steering attachment, because to guide that would be like driving a car. Then we hauled it up the fat folks' slide a little way and came down, hoo-hooing a warning to those ahead in the regulation way. We did this several times, liking it more and more. We got braver and tried the next slide, liking it still better. Then we got reckless and crossed into the bobsled scoot and tried that. Oh, fine! We did not go to the top—we did not know then how far the top was; but we went higher each time, liking it more and more, until we got up to a place where the sleds stood out at a perpendicular right angle as they swirled around a sudden circle against a constructed ice barrier. This looked dangerous, but getting more and more reckless, we decided to go even above that.

We hauled our sled up and up, constantly meeting bobsleds coming down and hearing the warning hoo-hoo-hooing of still others descending from the opaque upper mist. Still we climbed, dragging our sled, meeting bob after bob, also loads of hay and wood, and finally some walking girls who told us that the top of the slide was at Son Loup—that is, at the top of the funicular, some miles away.

We understood then; all those bobsledders took their sleds up by funicular and coasted down. We stopped there and got on our sled. The grade was very gradual at first, and we moved slowly—so slowly that a nice old lady who happened along gave us a push. We kept moving after that. We crossed a road, rounded a turn, leaped a railway track and struck into the straightway, going like a streak. We

had thought it a good distance to the sharp turn, with its right-angle wall of ice, but we were there with unbelievable suddenness. Then in a second we were on the wall, standing straight out into space; then in another we had shot out of it; but our curve seemed to continue.

There was a little barnyard just there and an empty hay sled—placed there on purpose, I think now. At any rate, the owner was there watching the performance. I think he had been expecting us. When all motion ceased he untelescoped us, and we limped about and discussed with him in native terms how much we ought to pay for the broken runner on his hay sled, and minor damages. It took five francs to cure the broken runner, which I believe had been broken all the time and was just set there handy to catch inadvertent persons like ourselves. We finished our slide then and handed in our sled, which the old Frenchman looked at fondly and said: "*Très bon—très vite.*" He did not know how nearly its speed had come to landing us in the newspapers.

We took the funicular to Son Loup, and at the top found ourselves in what seemed atmospheric milk. We stood at the hotel steps and watched the swift coasters pass. Every other moment they flashed by, from a white mystery above—a vision of faces, a call of voices—to the inclosing mystery again. It was like life; but not entirely, for they did not pass to silence. The long, winding hill far below was full of their calls—muffled by the mist—their hoo-hoo-hoos of warning to those ahead and to those who followed. But it was suggestive, too.

It was as if the lost were down there in that cold whiteness.

The fog grew thicker, more opaque, as the day waned. It was an impalpable wall. We followed the road from the hotel, still higher into its dense obscurity. When a tree grew near enough to the road for us to see it, we beheld an astonishing sight. The mist had gathered about the evergreen branches until they were draped, festooned, fairly clotted with pendulous frost embroidery.

We had been told that there was ski-ing up there and we were anxious to see it, but for a time we found only blankness and dead silence. Then at last—far and faint, but growing presently more distinct—we heard a light sound, a movement, a "swish—swish—swirl"—somewhere in the mist at our right, coming closer and closer, until it seemed right upon us, and strangely mysterious, there being no visible cause. We waited until a form appeared, no, grew, materialized from the intangible—so imperceptibly, so gradually, that at first we could not be sure of it. Then the outlines became definite, then distinct; an athletic fellow on skis maneuvered across the road, angled down the opposite slope, "swish—swish—swirl"—checking himself every other stroke, for the descent was steep—faded into unknown deeps below—the whiteness had shut him in. We listened while the swish—swish grew fainter, and in the gathering evening we felt that he had disappeared from the world into ravines of dark forests and cold enchantments from which there could be no escape.

We climbed higher and met dashing sleds now and

then, but saw no other ski-ers that evening. Next morning, however, we found them up there, gliding about in that region of vapors, appearing and dissolving like cinema figures, their voices coming to us muffled and unreal in tone. I left the road and followed down into a sort of basin which seemed to be a favorite place for ski practice. I felt exactly as if I were in a ghostly aquarium.

I was not much taken with ski-ing, as a whole. I noticed that even the experts fell down a good many times and were not especially graceful getting up.

But I approve of coasting under the new conditions—*i. e.*, with funicular assistance. In my day coasting was work—you had to tug and sweat up a long slippery incline for a very brief pleasure. Keats (I think it was Keats, or was it Carolyn Wells?) in his, or her, well-known and justly celebrated poem wrote:

> It takes a long time to make the climb,
> And a minute or less to come down;

But that poetry is out of date—in Switzerland. It no longer takes a long time to make the climb, and you do it in luxury. You sit in a comfortable seat and your sled is loaded on an especially built car. Switzerland is the most funiculated country in the world; its hills are full of these semi-perpendicular tracks. They make you shudder when you mount them for the first time, and I think I never should be able to discuss frivolous matters during an ascent, as I have seen some do. Still, one gets hardened, I suppose.

They are cheap. You get commutation tickets for very little, and all day long coasters are loading their sleds on the little shelved flatcar, piling themselves into the coach, then at the top snatching off their sleds to go whooping away down the long track to the lower station. Coasters get killed now and then, and are always getting damaged in one way and another; for the track skirts deep declivities, and there are bound to be slips in steering, and collisions. We might have stayed longer and tried it again, but we were still limping from our first experiment. Besides, we were not dressed for the real thing. Dress may not make the man, but it makes the sportsman.

Part II

MOTORING THROUGH THE GOLDEN AGE

Chapter I

THE NEW PLAN

BUT with the breaking out of the primroses and the hint of a pale-green beading along certain branches in the hotel garden, the desire to be going, and seeing, and doing; to hear the long drowse of the motor and look out over the revolving distances; to drop down magically, as it were, on this environment and that—began to trickle and prickle a little in the blood, to light pale memories and color new plans.

We could not go for a good while yet. For spring is really spring in Switzerland—not advance installments of summer mixed with left-overs from winter, but a fairly steady condition of damp coolness—sunlight that is not hot, showers that are not cold—the snow on the mountainsides advancing and retreating—sometimes, in the night, getting as low down as Chardonne, which is less than half an hour's walk above the hotel.

There is something curiously unreal about this Swiss springtime. We saw the trees break out into leaf, the fields grow vividly green and fresh, and then become gay with flowers, without at all feeling the reason for such a mood. In America such a change is wrought by hot days—cold ones, too, perhaps, but certainly hot ones; we have sweltered in April,

though we have sometimes snowballed in May. The Swiss spring was different. Three months of gradual, almost unnoticeable, mellowing kept us from getting excited and gave us plenty of time to plan.

That was good for us—the trip we had in mind now was no mere matter of a few days' journey, from a port to a destination; it was to be a wandering that would stretch over the hills and far away, through some thousands of kilometers and ten weeks of time. That was about all we had planned concerning it, except that we were going back into France, and at one point in those weeks we expected to touch Cherbourg and pick up a missing member of the family who would be dropped there by a passing ship. We studied the maps a good deal, and at odd times I tinkered with the car and wondered how many things would happen to it before we completed the long circle, and if I would return only partially crippled or a hopeless heap of damage and explanations. Never mind—the future holds sorrow enough for all of us. Let us anticipate only its favors.

So we planned. We sent for a road map of France divided into four sections, showing also western Germany and Switzerland. We spread it out on the table and traced a variety of routes to Cherbourg; by Germany, by Paris direct, by a long loop down into southern France. We favored the last-named course. We had missed some things in the Midi—Nîmes, Pont du Gard, Orange—and then there was still a quality in the air which made us feel that the south would furnish better motor weather in May.

Ah, me! There is no place quite like the Provence. It is rather dusty, and the people are drowsy and sometimes noisy, and there are mosquitoes there, and maybe other unpleasant things; but in the light chill of a Swiss spring day there comes a memory of rich mellowness and September roadsides, with gold and purple vintage ripening in the sun, that lights and warms the soul. We would start south, we said. We were not to reach Cherbourg until June. Plenty of time for the north, then, and later.

We discussed matters of real importance—that is to say, expenses. We said we would give ourselves an object lesson, this time, in what could really be done in motor economies. On our former trip we had now and again lunched by the roadside, with pleasing results. This time we would always do it. Before, we had stopped a few times at small inns in villages instead of seeking out hotels in the larger towns. Those few experiments had been altogether satisfactory, both as to price and entertainment. Perhaps this had been merely our good fortune, but we were willing to take further chances. From the fifty francs a day required for our party of four we might subtract a franc or so and still be nourished, body and soul. Thus we planned. When it was pleasant we enjoyed shopping for our roadside outfit; a basket, square, and of no great size; some agate cups and saucers; some knives and forks; also an alcohol stove, the kind that compacts itself into very small compass, aluminum, and very light—I hope they have them elsewhere than in Switzerland, for their usefulness is above price.

Chapter II

THE NEW START

IT was the first week in May when we started—the 5th, in fact. The car had been thoroughly overhauled, and I had spent a week personally on it, scraping and polishing, so that we might make a fine appearance as we stood in front of the hotel in the bright morning sunlight where our fellow guests would gather to see us glide away.

I have had many such showy dreams as that, and they have turned out pretty much alike. We did not start in the bright morning. It was not bright. It was raining, and it continued to rain until after eleven o'clock. By that time our fellow guests were not on hand. They had got tired and gone to secluded corners, or to their rooms, or drabbling into the village. When the sun finally came out only a straggler or two appeared. It was too bad.

We glided away, but not very far. I remembered, as we were passing through the town, that it might be well to take some funds along, so we drove around to the bank to see what we could raise in that line. We couldn't raise anything—not a centime. It was just past twelve o'clock and, according to Swiss custom, the bank was closed for two hours. Not a soul was there—the place was locked, curtained, barred. Only dynamite would have opened it.

We consulted. We had some supplies in our basket to eat by the roadside as soon as we were well into the country. Very good; we would drive to some quiet back street in the suburbs and eat them now. We had two hours to wait—we need feel no sense of hurry. So we drove down into Vevey la Tour and, behind an old arch, where friends would not be likely to notice us, we sat in the car and ate our first luncheon, with a smocked boy for audience —a boy with a basket on his arm, probably delaying the machinery of his own household to study the working economies of ours. Afterward we drove back to the bank, got our finances arranged, slipped down a side street to the lake-front, and fled away toward Montreux without looking behind us. It was not at all the departure we had planned.

It rained again at Montreux, but the sun was shining at Chillon, and the lake was blue. Through openings in the trees we could see the picture towns of Territet, Montreux, Clarens, and Vevey, skirting the shore—the white steamers plying up and down; the high-perched hotels, half lost in cloudland, and we thought that our travels could hardly provide a more charming vision than that. Then we were in Villeneuve, then in the open flat fields of the Rhone Valley, where, for Europe, the roads are poor; on through a jolty village to a bridge across the Rhone, and so along the south shore by Bouveret, to St. Gingolph, where we exhibited our papers at the Swiss *douane*, crossed a little brook, and were again in France. We were making the circuit of the lake, you see. All winter we had looked across to that

shore, with its villages and snow-mantled hills. We would now see it at close range.

We realized one thing immediately. Swiss roads are not bad roads, by any means, but French roads are better. In fact, I have made up my mind that there is nothing more perfect in this world than a French road. I have touched upon this subject before, and I am likely to dwell upon it unduly, for it always excites me. Those roads are a perfect network in France, and I can never cease marveling at the money and labor they must have cost. They are so hard and smooth, so carefully graded and curved, so beautifully shaded, so scrupulously repaired —it would seem that half the wealth and effort of France must be expended on her highways. The road from St. Gingolph was wider than the one we had left behind. It was also a better road and in better repair. It was a floor. Here and there we came to groups of men working at it, though it needed nothing, that we could see. It skirted the mountains and lake-front. We could look across to our own side now—to Vevey and those other towns, and the cloud-climbing hotels, all bright in the sunshine.

We passed a nameless village or two and were at Evian, a watering-place which has grown in fame and wealth these later years—a resort of fine residences and handsome hotels—not our kind of hotels, but plenty good enough for persons whose tastes have not been refined down to our budget and daily program of economies.

It was at Thonon—quaint old Thonon, once a residence of the Counts and Dukes of Savoy—that

we found a hostelry of our kind. It had begun raining again, and, besides, it was well toward evening. We pulled up in front of the Hôtel d'Europe, one of the least extravagant of the red-book hostelries, and I went in. The "*Bureau*," as the French call the office, was not very inviting. It was rather dingy and somber, and nobody was there. I found a bell and rang it and a woman appeared—not a very attractive woman, but a kindly person who could understand my "*Vous avez des chambres?*" which went a good ways. She had "*des chambres*" and certainly no fault could be found with those. They were of immense size, the beds were soft, smooth, and spotlessly clean. Yes, there was a garage, free. I went back with my report. The dinner might be bad, we said, but it would only be for once—besides, it was raining harder. So we went in, and when the shower passed we took a walk along the lake-front, where there is an old château, once the home of royalty, now the storehouse of plaster or something, and we stopped to look at a public laundry—a square stone pool under a shed, where the women get down on their knees and place the garments on a board and scrub them with a brush, while the cold water from the mountains runs in and out and is never warmed at all.

Returning by another way, we found about the smallest church in the world, built at one corner of the old domain. A woman came with a key and let us into it and we sat in the little chairs and inspected the tiny altar and all the sacred things with especial interest, for one of the purposes of our

pilgrimages was to see churches—the great cathedrals of France. Across from the church stood a ruined tower, matted with vines, the remains of a tenth-century château—already old when the one on the lake-front was new. We speak lightly of a few centuries more or less, but, after all, there was a goodly period between the tenth and the fourteenth, a period long enough to cover American history from Montezuma to date. These old towers, once filled with life and voices and movement, are fascinating things. We stood looking at this one while the dusk gathered. Then it began sprinkling again and it was dinner time.

So we returned to the hotel and I may as well say here, at once, that I do not believe there are any bad dinners in France. I have forgotten what we had, but I suppose it was fish and omelet, and meat and chicken, and salad and dessert, and I know it was all hot and delicious, and served daintily in courses, and we went to those soft beds happy and soothed, fell asleep to the sound of the rain pattering outside, and felt not a care in the world.

Chapter III

INTO THE JURAS

IT was still drizzling next morning, so we were in no hurry to leave. We plodded about the gray streets, picking up some things for the lunch basket, and Narcissa and the Joy got a chance to try their nice new French on real French people and were gratified to find that it worked just the same as it did on Swiss people. Then the sky cleared and I backed the car out of the big stable where it had spent the night, and we packed on our bags and paid our bill—twenty-seven francs for all, or about one dollar and thirty-five cents each for dinner, lodging, and breakfast—tips, one franc each to waitress, chambermaid, and garageman. If they were dissatisfied they did not look it, and presently we were once more on the road, all the cylinders working and bankruptcy not yet in sight. It was glorious and fresh along the lake-front—also appetizing. We stopped by and by for a little mid-morning luncheon, and a passing motorist, who probably could not believe we would stop merely to eat at that hour, drew up to ask if anything was wrong with our car and if he could help. They are kindly people, these French and Swiss. Stop your car by the roadside and begin to hammer something, or to take off a tire,

and you will have offers of assistance from four out of every five cars that pass.

There is another little patch of Switzerland again at the end of the lake, and presently you run into Geneva, and trouble. Geneva is certainly a curious place. The map of it looks as easy as nothing and you go gliding into it full of confidence, and presently find yourself in a perfect mess of streets that are not on the map at all, while all the streets that *are* on the map certainly have changed their names, for you cannot find them where they should be, and no one has ever heard of them. Besides, the wind is generally blowing—the *bise*—which does not simplify matters. Narcissa inquired and I inquired, and then the Joy, who, privately, I think, speaks the best French of any of us, also inquired; but the combined result was just a big coalyard which a very good-looking street led us straight into, making it necessary to back out and apologize and feel ashamed. Then we heard somebody calling us, and, looking around, saw the man in gray who had last directed us, and who also felt ashamed, it seemed—of us, or himself, or something—and had run after us to get us out of the mess. So he directed us again and we started, but the labyrinth closed in once more—the dust and narrow streets and blind alleys—and once again we heard a voice, and there was the man in gray—he must have run a half a mile this time—waving and calling and pointing the path out of the maze. It seemed that they were fixing all the good streets and we must get through by circuitous bad ones to the side of the city toward France. I asked him why

they didn't leave the good streets alone and fix the bad ones, but he only smiled and explained some more, and once more we went astray, and yet once more his voice came calling down the wind and he came up breathlessly, and this time followed with us, refusing even standing room on the running-board, until he got us out of the city proper and well headed for France. We had grown fond of that man and grieved to see him go. We had known him hardly ten minutes, I think, but friendships are not to be measured by time.

On a pretty hill where a little stream of water trickled we ate our first real luncheon—that is to say, we used our new stove. We cooked eggs and made coffee, and when there came a sprinkle we stood under our umbrellas or sat in the car and felt that this was really a kind of gypsying, and worth while.

There was a waving meadow just above the bank and I went up there to look about a little. No house was in sight, but this meadow was a part of some man's farm. It was familiar in every corner to him —he had known it always. Perhaps he had played in it as a child—his children had played in it after him—it was inseparable from the life and happiness of a home. Yet to us it was merely the field above our luncheon place—a locality hardly noticed or thought of—barely to be remembered at all.

Crossing another lonely but fertile land, we entered the hills. We skirted mountainsides—sometimes in sun, sometimes in shower—descended a steep road, and passed under a great arched battlement that

was part of a frowning fortress guarding the frontier of France. Not far beyond, at the foot of a long decline, lay a beautiful city, just where the mountains notched to form a passage for the Rhone. It was Bellegarde, and as we drew nearer some of the illusions of beauty disappeared. French cities generally show best from a distance. Their streets are not very clean and they are seldom in repair. The French have the best roads and the poorest streets in the world.

We drew up in front of the custom house, and exhibited our French *triptyque*. It was all right, and after it was indorsed I thought we were through. This was not true. A long, excited individual appeared from somewhere and began nervously to inspect our baggage. Suddenly he came upon a small empty cigar box which I had put in, thinking it might be useful. Cigars are forbidden, and at sight of the empty box our wild-eyed attenuation had a fit. He turned the box upside down and shook it; he turned it sidewise and looked into it; shook it again and knocked on it as if bound to make the cigars appear. He seemed to decide that I had hidden the cigars, for he made a raid on things in general. He looked into the gasoline tank, he went through the pockets of the catch-all and scattered our guidebooks and maps; then he had up the cushion of the back seat and went into the compartment where this time was our assortment of hats. You never saw millinery fly as it did in that man's hands, with the head of the family and Narcissa and the Joy grabbing at their flowers and feathers, and saying

things in English that would have hurt that man if he could have understood them. As for him, he was repeating, steadily, "*Pas dérange*"—"*Pas dérange*," when all the time he was deranging ruthlessly and even permanently. He got through at last, smiled, bowed, and retired—pleased, evidently, with the thoroughness of his investigation. But for some reason he entirely overlooked our bags strapped on the footboard. We did not remind him.

The Pert of the Rhone is at Bellegarde. The pert is a place where in dry weather the Rhone disappears entirely from sight for the space of seventy yards, to come boiling up again from some unknown mystery. Articles have been thrown in on one side—even live animals, it is said—but they have never reappeared on the other. What becomes of them is a matter of speculation. Perhaps some fearful underground maelstrom holds them. There was no pert when we were there—there had been too much rain. The Rhone went tearing through a gorge where we judged the pert should be located in less watery seasons.

During the rest of the afternoon we had rather a damp time—showery and sloppy, for many of the roads of these Jura foothills were in the process of repair, and the rain had stopped the repairs halfway. It was getting toward dusk when we came to Nantua —a lost and forgotten town among the Jura cliffs. We stopped in front of the showier hotel there, everything looked so rain-beaten and discouraging, but the woman who ran it was even showier than her hotel and insisted on our taking a parlor suite at some fabulous price. So we drove away and drew up

rather sadly at the Hôtel du Lac, which on that dull evening was far from fascinating. Yet the rooms they showed us were good, and the dinner—a surprise of fresh trout just caught, served sizzling hot, fine baked potatoes and steak, with good red wine aplenty—was such as to make us forswear forevermore the showy hotels for the humbler inns of France.

But I am moving too fast. Before dinner we walked for a little in the gray evening and came to an old church—one of the oldest in France, it is said, built in the ninth century and called St. Michels. It is over a thousand years old and looks it. It has not been much rebuilt, I think, for invasion and revolution appear seldom to have surmounted the natural ramparts of Nantua, and only the stormbeat and the corrosion of the centuries have written the story of decay. Very likely it is as little changed as any church of its time. The hand of restoration has troubled it little. We slipped in through the gathering dusk, and tiptoed about, for there were a few lights flickering near the altar and the outlines of bowed heads. Presently a priest was silhouetted against the altar lights as he crossed and passed out by a side door. He was one of a long line that stretched back through more than half of the Christian era and most of the history of France. When the first priest passed in front of that altar France was still under the Carlovingian dynasty—under Charles the Fat, perhaps; and William of Normandy would not conquer England for two hundred years. Then nearly four hundred years more would creep by—dim mediæval years—before Joan

of Arc should unfurl her banner of victory and martyrdom. You see how far back into the mists we are stepping here. And all those evenings the altar lights have been lit and the ministration of priests has not failed.

There is a fine picture by Eugene Delacroix in the old church, and we came back next morning to look at it. It is a St. Sebastian, and not the conventional, ridiculous St. Sebastian of some of the old masters—a mere human pincushion—but a beautiful youth, prostrate and dying, pierced by two arrows, one of which a pitying male figure is drawing from his shoulder. It must be a priceless picture. How can they afford to keep it here?

The weather seemed to have cleared, and the roads, though wet, were neither soft nor slippery. French roads, in fact, are seldom either—and the fresh going along the lake-front was delightful enough. But we were in the real Juras now, and one does not go through that range on a water grade. We were presently among the hills, the road ahead of us rising to the sky. Then it began to rain again, but the road was a good firm one and the car never pulled better.

It was magnificent climbing. On the steepest grades and elbow turns we dropped back to second, but never to low, and there was no lagging. On the high levels we stopped to let the engine cool and to add water from the wayside hollows. We were in the clouds soon, and sometimes it was raining, sometimes not. It seemed for the most part an uninhabited land—no houses and few fields—the ground

covered with a short bushy growth, grass and flowers. A good deal of it was rocky and barren.

On the very highest point of the Jura range, where we had stopped to cool the motor, a woman came along, leading three little children. She came up and said a few words in what sounded like an attempt at English. We tried our French on her, but it did not seem to get inside. I said she must speak some mountain patois, for we had used those same words lower down with good results. But then she began her English again—it was surely English this time, and, listening closely, we got the fringes and tag ends of a curious story. She was Italian, and had been in New York City. There, it seemed, she had married a Frenchman from the Juras, who, in time, when his homeland had called him, had brought her back to the hills. There he had died, leaving her with six children. She had a little hut up the side lane, where they were trying to scratch a living from the stony soil. Yes, she had chickens, and could let us have some eggs. She also brought a pail with water for the radiator.

A little farther along we cooked the eggs and laid out all our nice lunch things on natural stone tables and looked far down the Jura slope on an ancient village and an old castle, the beginning of the world across the range.

It was not raining now, and the air was soft and pleasant and the spot as clean and sweet as could be. Presently the water was boiling and the coffee made —instantaneous coffee, the George Washington kind. And nothing could be fresher than those eggs, nothing

unless it was the butter—unsalted butter, which with jam and rolls is about the best thing in the world to finish on.

We descended the Jura grades on the engine brake —that is, I let in the clutch, cut off the gasoline supply and descended on first or second speed, according to the grade. That saves the wheel brake and does no damage to the motor. I suppose everybody knows the trick, but I did not learn it right away, and there may be others who know as little. It was a long way to the lower levels, and some of the grades were steep. Then they became gradual, and we coasted—then the way flattened and we were looking across a level valley, threaded by perfectly ordered roads to a distant town whose roofs and spires gleamed in the sunlight of the May afternoon. It was Bourg, and one of the spires belonged to the church of Brou.

Chapter IV

A POEM IN ARCHITECTURE

THE church of Brou is like no other church in the world. In the first place, instead of dragging through centuries of building and never quite reaching completion, it was begun and finished in the space of twenty-five years—from 1511 to 1536—and it was supervised and paid for by a single person, Margaret of Austria, who built it in fulfillment of a vow made by her mother-in-law, Margaret of Bourbon. The last Margaret died before she could undertake her project, and her son, Philibert II, Duke of Savoy, called "The Handsome," followed before he could carry out her wishes. So his duchess, the other Margaret, undertook the work, and here on this plain, between the Juras and the Saône, she wrought a marvel in exquisite church building which still remains a marvel, almost untouched by any blight, after four hundred turbulent years. Matthew Arnold wrote a poem on the church of Brou which may convey the wonder of its beauty. I shall read it some day, and if it is as beautiful as the church I shall commit it, and on days when things seem rather ugly and harsh and rasping I will find some quiet corner and shut my eyes and say the lines and picture a sunlit May afternoon and the church of Brou. Then, perhaps, I shall not remember any more the

petty things of the moment but only the architectural shrine which one woman reared in honor of another, her mother-in-law.

It is not a great cathedral, but it is by no means a little church. Its lofty nave is bare of furnishings, which perhaps lends to its impression of bigness. But then you pass through the carved doors of a magnificent *juba* screen, and the bareness disappears. The oaken choir seats are carved with the richness of embroidery, and beyond them are the tombs—those of the two Margarets, and of Philibert—husband and son.

I suppose the world can show no more exquisitely wrought tombs than these. Perhaps their very richness defeats their art value, but I would rather have them so, for it reveals, somehow, the thoroughness and sincerity of Margaret's intent—her determination to fulfill to the final letter every imagined possibility in that other's vow.

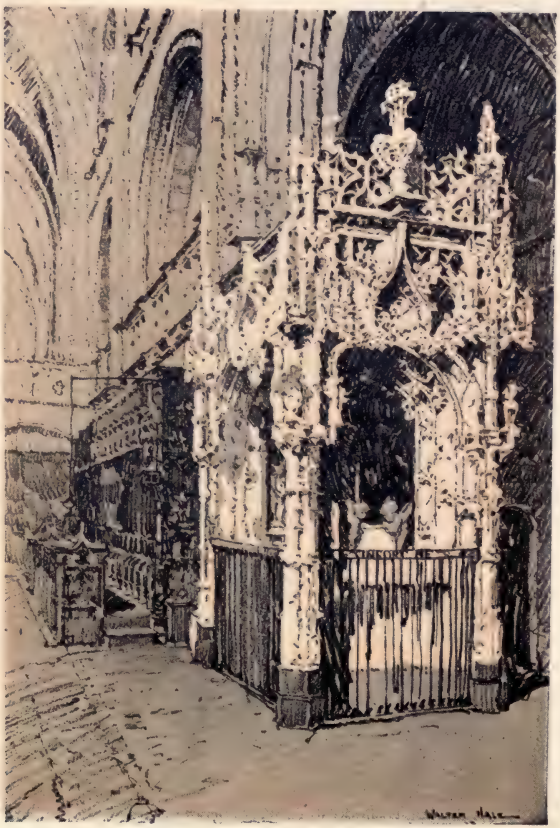
The mother's tomb is a sort of bower—a marble alcove of great splendor, within and without. Philibert's tomb, which stands in the center of the church, between the other two, is a bier, supported by female figures and fluted columns and interwoven decorations, exquisitely chiseled. Six cupids and a crouching lion guard the royal figure above; and the whole, in spite of its richness, is of great dignity. The tomb of the Duchess Margaret herself is a lofty canopy of marble incrustations, the elaborateness of which no words can tell. It is the superlative of Gothic decoration at a period when Gothic extravagance was supreme.

Like her husband Margaret sleeps in double effigy, the sovereign in state above, the figure of mortality, compassed by the marble supports, below. The mortality of the queen is draped, but in the case of Philibert, the naked figure, rather dim through the interspaces, has a curiously lifelike, even startling effect.

If the Duchess Margaret made her own tomb more elaborate, it is at least not more beautiful than the others, while an altar to the Virgin is still more elaborate—more beautiful, its grouped marble figures in such high relief that angels and cherubs float in the air, apparently unsupported. Here, as elsewhere, is a wealth of ornamentation; and everywhere woven into its intricacies one may find the initials P and M—Philibert and Margaret—and the latter's motto, "*Fortune, infortune, fort une.*" It has been called a mysterious motto, and different meanings have been twisted out of it. But my French is new and fresh and takes things quite obviously. "Fortune and misfortune strengthens or fortifies one" strikes me as a natural rendering. That last verb *fortifier* may seem to be abbreviated without warrant, but Margaret was a queen and could have done that for the sake of euphony and word-play.

The unscarred condition and the purity of these precious marbles is almost as astonishing as their beauty, when one considers the centuries of invasion and revolution, with a vandalism that respected nothing sacred, least of all symbols of royalty. By careful search we could discover a broken detail here and there, but the general effect was completeness,

Descending the Juras



The Tomb of Margaret of Austria, Church of Brou

and the white marble—or was it ivory tinted?—seen under the light of the illumined stained windows seemed to present the shapes and shades of things that, as they had never been new, neither would they ever be old.

Chapter V

VIENNE IN THE RAIN

IT is about forty miles from Bourg to Lyons, a country of fair fields, often dyed deeply red at this season with crimson clover, a country rich and beautiful, the road a straight line, wide and smooth, the trees on either side vividly green with spring. But Lyons is not beautiful—it is just a jangling, jarring city of cobbled crowded streets and mainly uninteresting houses and thronging humanity, especially soldiers. It is a place to remain unloved, unhonored, and unremembered.

The weather now put aside other things and really got down to the business of raining. It was fair enough when we left Lyons, but as we reached the top of a hill that overlooked the world I saw down the fields a spectral light and far deepening dusk which looked ominous. By the time we got our top up there was a steady downpour. We did not visit any wayside villages, though some of them looked interesting enough. French villages are none too clean at any time and rain does not seem to help them. Attractive old castles on neighboring hilltops received hardly a glance; even one overhanging our very road barely caused us to check up. How old it looked in its wet desolation, the storm eating into its crumbling walls!

We pulled up at last at Vienne, at the end of the bridge facing the cathedral. History has been written about Vienne, and there are monuments of the past which it is not good form to overlook. The head of the family said she was not very particular about form and that she *was* particular about being wet and discomforted on a chill spring day. France was full of monuments of the past, she said, and she had not started out to make her collection complete. She would study the cathedral from the car, and would the rest of us please remember to bring some fresh rolls for luncheon. So the rest of us went to the church of St. Maurice, which begins to date with the twelfth century and looks even older. Surrounded by comparatively modern buildings and soaked with rain it appeared, one of the most venerable relics I had ever seen. I do not think we found the inside very interesting. It was dead and dusky, and the seventh-century sarcophagus of St. Leoninus was, in the French phrase, not gay. On the whole there seemed a good deal of mutilation and not much taste.

We paddled through streets, asking directions to the Roman temple. Vienne was an important town under the Romans, the capital of one of the provinces of Gaul. Of course the Romans would leave landmarks—the kind that would last. When we found the temple of Augustus and Livia at last, it did not look so much older than the church, though it is more than as old again. It was so positively Roman and so out of place among its modern French surroundings that it looked exactly like something that had been brought there and set up for exhibition. It

took a heavy strain of imagination to see it as an integral part of the vanished Roman capital.

All about the temple lay fragments of that ancient city—exhibition pieces, like the temple. One felt that they should not be left out in the rain.

We hunted farther and found an Arch of Triumph, which the Romans generally built in conquered territory. It was hard to tell where the arch began and where it ended, such a variety of other things had grown up around and against it. Still, there was at least a section standing, Roman, and of noble proportions. It will still be Roman, and an arch, when those later incrustations have crumbled away. Roman work is not trivial stuff.

We might have lingered a little in the winding streets and made further discoveries, but the Joy had already sighted a place where the most attractive rolls and French cakes filled the window. The orders, she said, were very strict about the luncheon things. We must get them at once or we should not be able to locate the place again.

Curious things can happen in a brief absence. We returned to the car to find one of the back tires perfectly flat, the head of the family sitting serenely unconscious of her misfortune. We had picked up one of those flat-headed boot nails that Europeans love so well, and the tire had slowly and softly settled. There are cleaner, pleasanter things than taking off a tire and putting it on again in the rain, but I utilized a deep doorway on the corner for the dry work, and Narcissa held the umbrella while I pulled and pushed and grunted and pumped, during the more stren-

uous moments. Down the river a way we drew up in a grassy place under some trees and sat in the car and ate the *gâteaux* and other things, and under the green shelter I made coffee and eggs, the little cooker sitting cozily on the running-board. Then all the afternoon along the hard, wet, shining road that follows the Rhone to Valence, where we spent two days, watching the steady beat from the hotel windows, reading, resting, and eating a good deal of the time; doing not much sight-seeing, for we had touched Valence on our northward trip eight months before.

Chapter VI

THE CHÂTEAU I DID NOT RENT

IN a former chapter I have mentioned the mighty natural portrait in stone which Mark Twain found, and later named the Lost Napoleon, because he could not remember its location, and how we rediscovered it from Beauchastel on the Rhone, not far below Valence. We decided now that we would have at least another glimpse of the great stone face, it being so near. The skies had cleared this morning, though there was a good deal of wind and the sun was not especially warm. But we said we would go. We would be getting on toward the south, at any rate.

We did not descend on the Beauchastel side, there being a bridge shown on the map, at La Voulte, where we would cross. The reader may also remember the mention of a château below Beauchastel, with a sign on it which said that the property was to let, and my failure to negotiate for it. Very well, here is the sequel: When we got to the end of the bridge opposite La Voulte, we looked across to one of the closely packed mediæval villages of France with a great castle rising from its central height. It was one of the most picturesque things we had seen and I stopped to photograph it, declaring we must cer-

tainly visit it. So we crossed the bridge and at the end turned away toward Beauchastel, deciding to visit La Voulte later.

We were back almost immediately. The day was not as clear as it looked and the Lost Napoleon was veiled, behind a white horizon. Very likely it would be better by morning, we said, so we dropped our belongings at the tiny Beauchastel inn and made an afternoon excursion to the château. Imagine my feelings when, on looking up from the road, I suddenly discovered once more the big sign, "*Château À Louer.*" It was our château—the one I had formerly been discouraged from taking. It was providence, I said, knocking a second time at our door.

The others had another view. They said unless I would promise not to rent the premises I would not be permitted to examine them. I tried to make better terms, but finally submitted. We drove up into the narrow, ancient, cobbled streets a distance and left the car. Then we climbed. It was a steep and tortuous way, winding around scary edges and through doubtful-looking passages where, in weird holes and crannies, old and crooked people lived and were doing what they had always done since time began. I don't remember exactly how we finally made our way through crumble and decay—such surroundings as I have often known in dreams—to a grassy court where there was a semblance of genuine life. An old caretaker was there and he agreed to show us through.

It was called *La Voulte sur Rhone*, he said, and gave

its name to the village. No one knew just when it had been begun, but some of it had been there in the eleventh century, when it had belonged to Adon de Clerieu. It had passed through many hands and had been more than once reconstructed. At one time Guillaume de Fay held it; also Philippe IV and Louis de Bourbon Condé, and the great family of De Rohan. Kings had been entertained there, among them Louis XIII, an interesting fact, but I wished they had given better accommodations than the rambling, comfortless, and rather blind succession of boxes shown us as the royal suite. I also objected to the paper on the walls until our guide explained that it had been put there by an American tenant of the early Andrew Johnson period. He told us then that the château had been recently bought by a French author of two volumes of poetry, who was restoring portions of it and had reserved a row of rooms along the high terrace to let to other poets and kindred souls, so they might live side by side and look out over the fair land of France and interchange their fancies and dream long dreams. Standing on that lofty green vantage and looking out across the river and the valley of the Rhone, I was tempted to violate my treaty and live there forever after.

The only portion really restored, so far, is a large assembly room, now used as a sort of museum. I hope the owner will reclaim, or at least clean, some of the other rooms, and that he will not carry the work to the point where atmosphere and romance seem to disappear. Also, I truly hope he won't give

up the notion of that row of poets along the terrace, even if I can't be one of them; and I should like to slip up there sometime and hear them all striking their harps in unison and lifting a memnonic voice to the sunrise.

Chapter VII

AN HOUR AT ORANGE

OUR bill at Beauchastel for the usual accommodation—dinner, lodging, and breakfast—was seventeen francs-twenty, including the tips to two girls and the stableman. This was the cheapest to date; that is to say, our expense account was one dollar each, nothing for the car.

The Beauchastel inn is not really a choice place, but it is by no means a poor place—not from the point of view of an American who has put up at his own little crossroad hotels. We had the dining room to ourselves, with a round table in the center, and the dinner was good and plentiful and well served. If the rooms were bare they were at least clean, and the landlady was not to blame that it turned cold in the night, which made getting up a matter to be considered.

Still, we did get up pretty promptly, for we wanted to see if our natural wonder was on view. It was, and we took time and sketched it and tried to photograph it, though that was hopeless, for the distance was too great and the apparition too actinic—too blue. But it was quite clear, and the peaceful face impressed us, I think, more than ever. The best view is from the railway embankment.

We got another reward for stopping at Beauchastel.

We saw the old Rhone stagecoach come in, Daudet's coach, and saw descend from it Daudet's characters, *le Camarguais*, *le boulanger*, *le remouleur*, and the rest. At least they might have been those, for they belonged with the old diligence, and one could imagine the knife grinder saying to the hectoring baker, "*Tais-toi, je t'en prie*" *si navrant et si doux.*[1]

But now we felt the breath of the south. It was no longer chilly. The sun began to glow warm, the wind died. Sometime in the afternoon we arrived at Orange. Orange is not on the Rhone and we had missed it in our northward journey in September. It was one of our special reasons for returning to the south of France. Not the town of Orange itself, which is of no particular importance, but for the remnants of the Roman occupation—a triumphal arch and the chief wall of a Roman theater, both of such fine construction and noble proportions that they are to be compared with nothing else of their kind in France.

We came to the arch first—we had scarcely entered the town when we were directly facing it. It stands in a kind of circular grass plot a little below the present level, with short flights of steps leading down to it. At the moment of our arrival a boy of about fifteen was giving an exhibition by riding up and down these steps on a bicycle. I sincerely wished he would not do it.

Whatever its relation to its surroundings nineteen centuries ago, the arch of Orange is magnificently

[1] "*La Diligence de Baucaire*" in *Lettre de Mon Moulin*, Alphonse Daudet.

out of place to-day. Time-beaten and weather-stained—a visible manifest of a race that built not for the generations or the centuries, but for "the long, long time the world shall last"—supreme in its grandeur and antiquity, it stands in an environment quite modern, quite new, and wholly trivial.

The arch is really three arches—the highest in the center, and the attic, as they call the part above, is lofty, with rich decorations, still well preserved. There are restored patches here and there, but they do little injury.

From whatever direction you look the arch is beautiful, imposing, and certainly it seems eternal. When the present Orange has crumbled and has been followed by successive cities, it will still be there, but I trust the boy with the bicycle will not survive.

The theater is at the other end of town. It is not an amphitheater or an inclosure of any kind, but a huge flat wall, about as solid as the hills and one of the biggest things in France. Strictly speaking, it was never part of any building at all. It was simply a stage property, a sort of permanent back scene for what I judge to have been an open-air theater. There is no doubt about its permanency. It is as high as an ordinary ten- or twelve-story building, longer than the average city block, and it is fifteen feet thick. That is the Roman idea of scenery. They did not expect to shift it often. They set up some decorative masonry in front of it, with a few gods and heroes solidly placed, and let it go at that. Their stage would be just in front of this, rather narrow, and about on a ground level. The whole was built facing

a steep rocky hillside, which was carved into a semi-circle of stone seats, in the old fashion which Rome borrowed from Greece. This natural stonework did not stand the wash of centuries, or it may have been quarried for the château which the princes of Orange built at the summit of the hill. The château is gone to-day, and the seats have been restored, I dare say, with some of the original material. Every August now a temporary stage is erected in the ancient theater, and the Comédie Française gives performances there.

The upper works of the hill, where the château was, are rather confusing. There are cave-like places and sudden drops and rudimentary passages, all dimly suggesting dungeons, once black and horrible, now happily open to the sun. And, by the way, I suppose that I am about the only person in the world who needed to be told that a line of kings originated at Orange. I always supposed that William of Orange took his name from an Irish society whose colors, along with a shamrock, he wore in his hat.

By some oversight the guidebook does not mention the jam that is sold at Orange. It is put up in tin pails, and has in it all the good things in the world—lumps of them—price, one franc per pail.

We did not stop at Avignon, for we had been there before, but followed around outside the ancient wall and came at last to the Rhone bridge, and to the island of our smoke adventure in the days of our inexperience, eight months earlier. This time we camped on the island in a pretty green nook by the

water's edge, left the car under a tree, and made tea and had some of that excellent jam and some fresh rolls and butter, and ate them looking across to ancient Villeneuve and the tower of Philip le Bel.

Oh, the automobile is the true flying carpet—swift, willing, always ready, obeying at a touch. Only this morning we were at Beauchastel; a little while ago we were under the ancient arch at Orange and sat in the hoary theater. A twist of the crank, a little turning of the wheel, a brief flight across wood and meadow, and behold! the walls of Avignon and a pleasant island in the river, where we alight for a little to make our tea in the greenery, knowing that we need only to rub the magic lamp to sail lightly away, resting where we will.

Our tea ended, the genii awoke and dropped us into Villeneuve, where, in an open market, we realized that it was cherry season. I thought I had seen cherries before, but never in this larger sense. Here there were basketfuls, boxfuls, bucketfuls, barrelfuls, wagonloads—the whole street was crowded with wagons, and every wagon heaped high with the crimson and yellow fruit. Officials seemed to be weighing them and collecting something, a tax, no doubt. But what would be done with them later? Could they ship all those cherries north and sell them? And remember this was only one evening and one town. The thought that every evening and every town in the Midi was like this in cherry time was stupefying. We had to work our way among cherry wagons to get to the open road again, and our "flying carpet" came near getting damaged

by one of them, because of my being impatient and trying to push ahead when an approaching cherry wagon had the right of way. As it was, I got a vigorous admonishment in French profanity, which is feathery stuff, practically harmless. I deserved something much more solid.

Consider for a moment this French profanity: About the most violent things a Frenchman can say are "*Sacre bleu*" and "*Nom d'un chien!*" One means "Sacred blue" and the other "Name of a dog." If he doubles the last and says "Name of a name of a dog," he has gone his limit. I fail to find anything personal or destructive or profane in these things. They don't seem to hit anything, not even the dog. And why a dog? Furthermore, concerning the color chosen for profane use—why blue? why not some shade of Nile green, or—or— Oh, well, let it go, but I do wish I could have changed places with that man a few minutes!

We considered returning to Avignon for the night, but we went to Tarascon instead, and arrived after dark at a bright little inn, where we were comfortably lodged, and a relative of Tartarin brought us a good supper and entertained us with his adventures while we ate.

Chapter VIII

THE ROAD TO PONT DU GARD

IT is a wide, white road, bordered by the rich fields of May and the unbelievable poppies of France. Oh, especially the poppies! I have not spoken of them before, I think. They had begun to show about as soon as we started south—a few here and there at first, splashes of blood amid the green, and sometimes mingling a little with the deep tones of the crimson clover, with curious color effect. They became presently more plentiful. There were fields where the scarlet and the vivid green of May were fighting for the mastery, and then came fields where the scarlet conquered, was supreme, and stretched away, a glowing, radiant sheen of such splendid color as one can hardly believe, even for the moment that he turns away. It was scarlet silk unrolled in the sun. It was a tide of blood. It was as if all the world at war had made this their battlefield. And it did not grow old to us. When we had seen a hundred of those fields they still fascinated us; we still exclaimed over them and could not tear our eyes away.

We passed wagonloads of cherries now. In fact, we did not pass loads of anything else. Cherry harvest was at its height. Everybody was carrying baskets, or picking, or hauling to market. We stopped and asked an old man drowsing on a load to

sell us some. He gave us about a half a peck for eight cents and kept piling on until I had to stop him. Then he picked up a specially tied bunch of selected ones, very handsome, and laid them on top and pointed at Narcissa—"For the demoiselle." We thanked him and waved back to him, but he had settled down into his seat and was probably asleep again. All drivers sleep in the Provence. They are children of the south and the sun soothes them. They give their horses the rein and only waken to turn out when you blow or shout very loudly. You need an especially strong Klaxonette in the Provence.

Baedeker says: "The Pont du Gard is one of the grandest Roman structures in existence." I am glad Baedeker said that, for with my limited knowledge I should have been afraid to do it, but I should always have thought so. A long time ago I visited the Natural Bridge of Virginia. I had been disappointed in natural wonders, and I expected no great things of the Natural Bridge. I scaled my imagination down by degrees as I followed a path to the viewpoint, until I was prepared to face a reality not so many times bigger than the picture which my school geography had made familiar. Then all at once I turned a corner and stood speechless and stupefied. Far up against the blue a majestic span of stone stretched between two mighty cliffs. I have seen the Grand Cañon since, and Niagara Falls, but nothing ever quite overwhelmed me as did that stupendous Virginia stone arch—nothing until we rounded a bend in the road and stopped facing the Pont du Gard. Those two are of the same class—

bridges supreme—the one of nature, the other of art. Neither, I think, was intended as a bridge originally. The Romans intended these three colossal tiers of columns, one above the other, merely as supports for the aqueduct at the top, which conducted water to Nîmes. I do not know what the Almighty intended his for—possibly for decoration. To-day both are used as bridges—both are very beautiful, and about equally eternal, I should think, for the Roman builders came nearer to the enduring methods of the Original Builder than any other architects save, possibly, the Egyptians. They did not build walls of odds and ends of stone with mortar plastered between; they did not face their building stones to look pretty outside and fill in behind with chips and mortar, mostly mortar. They took the biggest blocks of stone they could find, squared them, faced them perfectly on all sides, and laid them one on top of the other in such height and in such thickness as they deemed necessary for a lasting job. Work like that does not take an account of time. The mortar did not crumble from between them with the centuries. There was none to crumble. The perfectly level, perfectly matched stones required no cementing or plaster patching. You cannot to-day insert a thin knife blade between these matched stones.

The Pont du Gard is yellow in tone and the long span against the blue sky is startlingly effective. A fine clear stream flows under it, the banks are wild with rock and shrub, the lower arches frame landscape bits near or more distant. I don't know

why I am trying to describe it—I feel that I am dwarfing it, somehow—making it commonplace. It is so immense—so overwhelming to gaze upon. Henry James discovered in it a "certain stupidity, a vague brutality." I judge it seemed too positive, too absolute, too literal and everlasting for the author of the *Golden Bowl*. He adds, however, that "it would be a great injustice not to insist upon its beauty." One must be careful not to do injustice to the Pont du Gard.

We made our luncheon camp a little way from the clear stream, and brought water from it and cooked eggs and made coffee (but we carry bottled water for that), and loafed in the May sun and shade, and looked at that unique world-wonder for an hour or more. The Joy discovered a fine school of fish in the stream—trout, maybe.

A hundred years ago and more the lower arches of the Pont du Gard were widened to make a bridge, and when at last we were packed and loaded again we drove across this bridge for the nearer view. It was quite impossible to believe in the age of the structure—its preservation was so perfect. We drove to the other end and, turning, drove slowly back. Then lingeringly we left that supreme relic in the loneliness where, somehow, it seemed to belong, and followed the broad white road to Nîmes. There is a Roman arena at Nîmes, and a temple and baths—the Romans built many such things; but I think they could have built only one Pont du Gard.

Chapter IX

THE LUXURY OF NÎMES

WHEN the Romans captured a place and established themselves in it they generally built, first an Arch of Triumph in celebration of their victory; then an arena and a theater for pleasure; finally a temple for worship. Sometimes, when they really favored the place and made it a resort, they constructed baths. I do not find that they built an Arch of Triumph at Nîmes, but they built an arena, baths, and a temple, for they still stand. The temple is the smallest. It is called the "Maison Carrée," and it is much like the temple we saw at Vienne that day in the rain, but in a finer state of preservation. Indeed, it is said to be one of the best preserved Roman temples in existence. It is graceful and exquisite, and must have suited Henry James, who did not care for Roman arenas because they are not graceful and exquisite, as if anything built for arena purposes would be likely to be anything less than solid and everlasting. We did not go into the Maison Carrée. It is a museum now, and the fact that it has also been used as a warehouse and stable somehow discouraged us. It would be too much done over. But the outside was fascinating.

We thought the garden of the Roman baths and fountain would be well to see in the evening. We

drove along the quay by the side of the walled river which flows down the middle of the street, and came to the gates of the garden and, leaving the car, entered.

At first it seemed quite impossible to believe that a modern city of no great size or importance should have anything so beautiful as this garden, or, having it, should preserve it in such serene beauty and harmony. But then one remembered that this was France, and of France it was the Provence and not really a part of the sordid, scrambling world at all.

It is a garden of terraces and of waterways and of dim, lucent pools to which stairways descend, and of cypresses, graying statuary, and marble bridges and fluted balustrades; and the water is green and mysterious, and there is a background of dark, wooded hills, with deep recesses and lost paths. We climbed part way up the hillside and found a place where we could look out on the scene below. In the fading light it seemed a place of enchantment.

It is not easy to tell what part of this garden the Romans built and what was added from time to time during the centuries. It seems to have been liberally reconstructed a hundred or so years ago, and the statuary is none of it of the Roman period. But if there was ever any incongruity the blurring hand of time has left it invisible to our unpracticed eyes. We lingered in this magic garden, and spoke softly of the generations that for nineteen centuries have found their recreation there, and we turned often for a last look, reluctant to leave something that seemed likely to vanish the moment one turned away.

Our hotel was on the square in which stands the

arena, so that it was but a step away at any time. We paid it one thorough visit, and sat in the seats, and scaled the upper heights, and looked down on the spot where tragedy and horror had been employed as means of pleasure for a good portion of the world's history. I am sorry the Provence is still rather cruel minded, though I believe they do not always kill the bull now in the Sunday-afternoon fights. It is only a few times in each season that they have a fight to the death. They had one the Sunday before our arrival, according to the bills still posted at the entrance. In the regular Sunday games anyone has the privilege of snatching a bow of red ribbon from the bull's forehead. I had a fever to try it, but, this being only Tuesday, it did not seem worth while to wait.

On the whole I think we did not find the arena at Nîmes as interesting as the one at Arles, perhaps because we had seen Arles first. It is somewhat smaller than the Arles circus, and possibly not so well preserved, but it is of majestic proportions, and the huge layers of stone, laid without cement in the Roman fashion, have never moved except where Vandal and Saracen and the building bishops have laid despoiling hands.

Not all the interest of Nîmes is ancient; Alphonse Daudet was born in Nîmes, and the city has set up a statue and named a street in his honor. Daudet's birthplace is not on the street that bears his name, but on the Boulevard Gambetta, one of the wide thoroughfares. Daudet's house is a part of the Bourse du Commerce now, and I do not think it

was ever the "*habitation commode, tout ombragée de plantanes*" of which he writes so fondly in *Le Petit Chose*—the book which we have been told is, in part, at least, his own history. There is nothing now to indicate that it was ever the birthplace of anyone, except the plaque at the door, and as we sat reading this we realized that by a coincidence we had come at a fortunate time. The plaque said, "Born May 13, 1840." Now, seventy-four years later, the date was the same. It was the poet's birthday!

Chapter X

THROUGH THE CÉVENNES

THE drowsy Provence, with its vineyard slopes and poppied fields, warm lighted and still, is akin to Paradise. But the same Provence, on a windy day, with the chalk dust of its white roads enveloping one in opaque blinding clouds, suggests Sherman's definition of war. We got a taste of this aspect leaving Nîmes on our way north. The roads were about perfect, hard and smooth, but they were white with dust, and the wind did blow. I have forgotten whether it was the mistral or the tramontane, and I do not think it matters. It was just wind—such wind as I used to meet a long time ago in Kansas.

Our first town was Alais, but when we inquired about Alai, according to the French rule of pronunciation, they corrected us and said Alais—sounding the s. That is Provençal, I take it, or an exception to the rule. Alais itself was of no importance, but along the way there were villages perched on hilltops, with castles crowning the high central points, all as picturesque and mediæval as anything well could be. We were always tempted to go up to them, but the climb was likely to be steep; then those villages seen from the inside might not be as poetry-picturelike as when viewed from below, looking up an orchard slope to their weathered balconies and vine-hung walls.

We were in the Cévennes about as soon as we had passed Alais. The Cévennes are mountains—not mere hills, but towering heights, with roads that wind and writhe up them in a multiplicity of convolutions, though always on perfect grade, always beautiful, bringing to view deep vistas and wide expanses at every turn.

There was little wind now—the hills took care of that—and we were warm and comfortable and happy in this fair, lonely land. There were few habitations of any kind; no automobiles; seldom even a cart. Water was scarce, too; it was hard to find a place to replenish our bottles. But we came at last to a cabin in the woods—a sort of wayside café it proved—where a woman sold us half a liter of red wine for about five cents, and supplied us with spring water free. A little farther along, where the road widened a bit, we halted for luncheon. On one side a steep ascent, wooded, on the other a rather abrupt slope, grass-covered and shady with interspaced trees. By and by we noticed that all the trees were of one variety—chestnut. It was, in fact, a chestnut orchard, and proclaimed the industry of this remote land. We saw many such during the afternoon; probably the district is populous enough during the chestnut harvest.

Through the long afternoon we went winding upward among those unpeopled hills, meeting almost nothing in the way of human life, passing through but one village, Grenolhac, too small even to be set down in the road book. In fact, the first place mentioned beyond Alais was Villefort, with a small pop-

ulation and one inn, a hostelry indicated in the book merely by a little wineglass, and not by one of the tiny houses which, in their varied sizes, picture the recommended hotels and the relative importance thereof. There was no mention of rooms in connection with the Café Marius Balme; the outlook for accommodation overnight was not very cheerful.

It was chilly, too, for evening was closing in and we were well up in the air. The prospect of camping by the roadside, or even of sitting up in a café until morning, did not attract a person of my years, though Narcissa and the Joy declared that to build a camp fire and roll up in the steamer rugs would be "lovely." As there were only three rugs, I could see that somebody was going to be overlooked in the arrangement; besides, a night in the mountains in May, let it begin ever so gayly, is pretty sure to develop doubtful features before morning. I have done some camping in my time, and I have never been able to get together enough steamer rugs to produce a really satisfactory warmth at, say, three or four o'clock in the morning, when the frost is embroidering the bushes and the stars have a glitter that drills into your very marrow. Langogne, the first town marked with a hotel, was at least thirty-five miles farther along, and I could tell by the crinkly look of the road as it appeared on our map that it was no night excursion. Presently we descended into a sort of gorge, and there was Villefort, an isolated, ancient little hamlet forgotten among the Cévennes hilltops. We came to an open space and there, sure enough, was the Café Balme, and by the side of it, happy

vision, another little building with the sign "Hôtel Balme."

It was balm indeed. To my faithful inquiry, "*Vous avez des chambres?*" Yes, they had chambers —they were across the open square, over the garage —that is to say, the stable—if the monsieur and his party would accept them.

"*Oui, certainement!*"

They were not luxurious—they were just bare boxes, but they were clean, with comfortable beds, and, dear me! how inviting on this particularly chilly evening, when one has put in most of the day climbing narrow, circuitous mountain roads—one-sided—that is to say, one side a wall, the other falling off into unknown space.

They were very quiet rooms, for we had the place to ourselves. The car would sleep just under us, and we had a feeling of being nomads, the kind that put up in barns and empty buildings. A better place could hardly have made us happier, and a better dinner than we had could not be produced anywhere. There was soup—French soup; hot fried trout, taken that day from the mountain streams; then there was omelet of the freshest eggs, served so hot that one must wait for it to cool; also a dish of veal of the same temperature and of such tenderness that you could cut it with a fork; and there was steak which we scarcely touched, and a salad, and fruit and cakes and camembert cheese, with unlimited wine throughout. How could they give a dinner like that, and a good bed, and coffee and rolls with jam next morning, all for four francs—that is, eighty cents, each?

I will tell you: they did their own cooking, and were lost so far in the mountains that they had not yet heard of the "high cost of living." And if I have not mentioned it before, I wish to say here that all the red road-book hotels are good, however small or humble they appear. Indeed, I am inclined to believe that *all French* hotels are good—at least that they have good food and beds. With the French, to have good beds and good food is a religion.

You notice I do not mention the coffee. That is because it is not real coffee. It is—I don't quite know what it is. In the large hotels it merely looks like coffee. In these small inns it looks like a dark, ominous soup and tastes like that as much as anything. Also, it is not served in cups, but bowls, porridge bowls, with spoons to match, and the natives break chunks of bread in it and thus entirely carry out the soup idea. This is the French conception of coffee in the remoter districts, but the bread and jam or honey that go with it are generally good and plentiful, and I suppose the fearful drink itself must be wholesome. One hears a good deal in America of delicious French coffee, but the only place to get it is *in* America, in New Orleans, say, or New York. I have never found any really good coffee even in Paris.

I think not many travelers visit the Cévennes. The road across the mountains from Nîmes toward Paris seemed totally untraversed, at least so far as tourists are concerned. No English is spoken anywhere—not a word. This was France—not the France that is Paris, which is not France at all any

more than New York City is America, but the France which is a blending of race and environment—of soil and sky and human struggle into a unified whole that is not much concerned with the world at large, and from generation to generation does not greatly change.

One may suppose, for instance, that the market at Villefort, which we saw next morning, was very much what it was a hundred years ago—that the same sturdy women in black dresses and curious hats had carried the same little bleating kids, one under each arm—that trout and strawberries and cheese and cherries and all the products of that mountain district were offered there, around the old stone fountain, in the same baskets under the shadow of the same walls, with so little difference in the general aspect that a photograph, if one could have been taken then, might be placed beside the ones we made and show no difference in the fashion of things at all.

We bought some of the strawberries, great delicious dewy ones, and Narcissa and the Joy wanted to buy one or even a dozen of the poor little kids, offering to hold them in their laps constantly. But I knew that presently I should be holding one or more of those kids in my own lap and I was afraid I could not do that and drive with safety. I said that some day when we had time we would build a wooden cage on wheels to put behind the car and gradually collect a menagerie, but that I was afraid we didn't have time just now. We must be getting on.

Our landlady was a good soul. She invited us

into the kitchen, neat, trim, and shining, and showed us some trout caught that morning, and offered to give us a mess to take along. The entire force of the hotel assembled to see us go. It consisted of herself and her daughter, our waitress of the night before. Out bill was sixteen francs. The old life —the simple life—of France had not yet departed from Villefort.

Chapter XI

INTO THE AUVERGNE

WE had climbed two thousand feet from Nîmes to reach Villefort and thought we were about on the top of the ridge. But that was a mistake; we started up again almost as soon as we left, and climbed longer hills, higher and steeper hills, than ever. Not that they were bad roads, for the grades were perfect, but they did seem endless and they were still one-sided roads, with a drop into space just a few feet away, not always with protecting walls. Still there was little danger, if one did not get too much interested in the scenery, which was beyond anything for its limitless distances, its wide spaces and general grandeur.

Whenever we got to a level spot I stopped the car to look at it while the engine cooled. It is a good plan to stop the car when one wishes really to admire nature. The middle of the road ahead is thought to be the best place for the driver to look while skirting a mountainside.

To return to roads just for a moment, there were miles of that winding lofty way, apparently cut out of the solid face of the mountain, through a country almost entirely uninhabited—a rocky, barren land that could never be populous. How can the French afford those roads—how can they pay for

them and keep them in condition? I was always expecting to meet a car on the short high turns, and kept the horn going, but never a car, never a carriage—only now and then a cart, usually the stone-cart of some one mending the roads. The building and engineering of those roads seems to me even a greater marvel than the architecture of cathedrals and châteaux. They are as curly and crooked as a vine, but they ascend and descend with a precision of scale that makes climbing them a real diversion. We ascended those hills on high speed—all of them.

We were about at the snow line now. We could see it but a little way higher up, and if the weather had not been so bright and still we should have been cold. Once we saw what we took to be a snowbank just ahead by the roadside. But when we came nearer we saw it was narcissus, growing there wild; later we saw whole fields of it. It flourished up there as the poppies did lower down.

The country was not all barren. There were stretches of fertile mountain-top, with pastures and meadows and occasional habitations. Now and then on some high point we saw a village clustering about an ancient tower. Once—it was at Prévenchères, a tiny village of the Auvergne—we stopped and bought eggs and bread. There were also a few picture postals to be had there, and they showed the Bourrée, which is a native dance of the Auvergne—a rather rough country café dance, I gathered, but picturesque, in the native costume. I wish we might have seen it.

The mountains dwindled to hills, humanity became

more plentiful. It was an open, wind-swept country now—rolling and fruitful enough, but barren of trees; also, as a rule, barren of houses. The people live in the villages and their industry would seem to be almost entirely pasturage—that is, cattle raising. I have never seen finer cattle than we saw in the Auvergne, and I have never seen more uninviting, dirtier villages. Barns and houses were one. There were no dooryards, and the cattle owned the streets. A village, in fact, was a mere cattle yard. I judge there are few more discouraging-looking communities, more sordid-looking people, than in just that section. But my guess is that they are a mighty prosperous lot and have money stuffed in the savings bank. It is a further guess that they are the people that Zola wrote of in *La Terre*. Of course there was nothing that looked like a hotel or an inn in any of those places. One could not imagine a French hotel in the midst of such a nightmare.

Chapter XII

LE PUY

ONE of the finest things about a French city is the view of it from afar off. Le Puy is especially distinguished in this regard. You approach it from the altitudes and you see it lying in a basin formed by the hills, gleaming, picturesque, many spired—in fact, beautiful. The evening sun was upon it as we approached, which, I think, gave it an added charm.

We were coasting slowly down into this sunset city when we noticed some old women in front of a cottage, making lace. We had reached the lacemaking district of the Auvergne. We stopped and examined their work and eventually bought some of it and photographed them and went on down into the city. Every little way other old women in front of humble cottages were weaving lace. How their fingers did make the little bobbins fly!

I had never heard of a *puy* (pronounced "pwee") before we went to the Auvergne and I should never have guessed what it was from its name. A *puy* is a natural spire, or cone, of volcanic stone, shooting straight up into the air for several hundred or several thousand feet, often slim and with perpendicular sides. Perhaps we should call them "needles." I seem to remember that we have something of the kind in Arizona known by that name.

The Auvergne has been a regular *puy* factory in its time. It was in the Quaternary era, and they were volcanic chimneys in the day of their first usefulness. Later—a good deal later—probably several million years, when those flues from the lower regions had become filled up and solidified, pious persons began building churches on the tops of them, which would seem pretty hazardous, for if one of those chimneys ever took a notion to blow out, it would certainly lift the church sky high. Here at Le Puy the chimney that gives it its name is a slender cone two hundred and eighty feet high, with what is said to be a curious tenth-century church on the very tip of it. We were willing to take it for granted. There are about five hundred steps to climb, and there is a good deal of climbing in Le Puy besides that item. We looked up to it, and across to it, and later—when we were leaving—down to it from another higher point. I don't know why churches should be put in such inconvenient places—to test piety, maybe. I am naturally a pious person, but when I think of the piety that has labored up and down those steps through rain and shine and cold and heat for a thousand years I suffer.

We did climb the stair of the cathedral of Notre Dame de Puy, which sweeps upward in broad majesty, like a ladder to heaven. There are over a hundred steps, and they were originally designed so the overflow congregation could occupy them and look into the church and see the officiating priest. An architectural change has made this impossible to-day, so perhaps the congregation no longer overflows. In

fact, there was a time when great pilgrimages were made to Notre Dame du Puy, and it was then that the steps were filled. There are little shops on each rise of this great flight—ascending with it—shops where religious charms and the like are sold. At the earlier period the merchants displayed their wares on small tables, and the street is called *Rue des Tables* to this day.

The church is built of black and white stone, and has a curiously Turkish look. It all seems very foreign to France, and indeed the whole place was not unlike a mosque, though more somber, less inviting. It was built in the twelfth century, and under its porch are two of the original cedar doors, with Latin inscriptions.

I am sure Le Puy is a religious place. On every high point there is a church or a saint, or something inspiring. A statue of Notre Dame de France is on the highest point of all, four hundred and thirty-five feet above the town. This statue was cast from the metal of two hundred Russian cannons taken at Sebastopol. You can ascend to it by some six or seven hundred steps cut in the solid rock. We did not go up there, either. Even the statement that we could ascend another flight of steps inside the statue and stand in its very head did not tempt us. Americans have been spoiled for these things. The lift has made loafers of us all.

What I think we enjoyed most in Le Puy was its lacemakers. At every turn, in every little winding street, one saw them—singly and in groups; they were at the front of every door. They were of all

ages, but mainly, I think, they were old women. Many of them wore the Auvergne costume—quaint hats or caps, and little shawls, and wooden shoes. Lacemaking is the industry of the Haute-Loire district, and is said to employ ninety thousand women. I think that is an underestimate. It seemed to me we saw as many as that ourselves in front of those mediæval doorways of Le Puy.

Chapter XIII

THE CENTER OF FRANCE

IT is grand driving from Le Puy northward toward Clermont-Ferrand and Vichy. It is about the geographical center of France, an unspoiled, prosperous-looking land. Many varieties of country are there—plain, fertile field, rich upland slopes. All the way it is picture country—such country as we have seen in the pictures and seldom believed in before. Cultivated areas in great squares and strips, fields of flowers—red, blue, white—the French colors; low solid-looking hills, with little cities halfway to the summit, and always, or nearly always, a castle or two in their midst; winding, shining rivers with gray-stone bridges over them, the bright water appearing and reappearing at every high turn.

Our road made no special attempt to reach the towns. We viewed them from a distance, and there were narrower roads that turned in their direction, but our great national highway—it was No. 9 now—was not intended for their special accommodation. When it did reach a town it was likely to be a military center, with enormous barracks—new, many of them—like those at Issoire, a queer old place where we spent the night and where I had a real adventure.

It was my custom to carry under the back seat a

bottle of Scotch whisky in event of severe illness, or in case of acute motor trouble. For reasons I do not at the moment recall—perhaps the cork had leaked—our supply seemed low at Issoire, and I decided to see what I could find. I had little hope, for in France even the word "whisky" is seldom recognized. Still, I would make diligent inquiry, our case being pretty desperate. There was not enough in the bottle to last till morning—I mean, of course, in case anything serious should happen.

I had the usual experience at the cafés. The attendants repeated the word "whisky" vaguely, and in various ways, and offered me all sorts of gayly tinted liquids which I did not think would cure anything I was likely to have. I tried a drug store, where a gentle pharmacist listened awhile to my French, then dug out from the back of a lower drawer a circular on Esperanto. Imagine!

I was about ready to give it up when I happened to notice a low, dim shop the shelves of which seemed filled with fancy bottles. The place had an ancient, mellow look, but I could see at a glance that its liquids were too richly colored for my taste—needs, I mean. I could try, however.

The little gray man who waited on me pronounced the word in several ways and scratched his head.

"*Wisky,*" he said, "*visky—viskee!*"

Then he seemed to explode. A second later he was digging a dusty book out of a dusty pile, and in a moment was running his fingers down a yellow page. I dare say it was an old stock list, for suddenly he started up, ran to a dark, remote shelf,

pulled away some bottles, and from the deeper back recesses dragged a bottle and held it up in triumph.

"*Voilà!*" he said, "*veeskee! Veeskee Eereesh!*"

Shades of St. Patrick! It was old Irish whisky—old, how old—perhaps laid in by his grandfather, for a possible tourist, a hundred years before. I tried to seem calm—indifferent.

"*Encore?*" I said.

But no, there was no *encore*—just this one. The price, oh yes, it was four francs.

Imagine!

Issoire is a quaint place and interesting. I shall always remember it.

To motorists Clermont-Ferrand is about the most important city in France. It is the home of tire manufacturers, and among them the great benevolent one that supplies the red road book, and any desired special information, free. We felt properly grateful to this factory and drove out to visit it. They were very good to us; they gave us a brand-new red-book and a green-book for Germany and Switzerland. The factory is a large one, and needs to be. About four-fifths of the cars of Europe go rolling along on its products, while their owners, without exception, use its wonderfully authentic guides. Each year the road books distributed free by this firm, piled one upon the other, would reach to a height of more than five miles. They cover about all the countries, and are simply priceless to the motorist. They are amusing, too. The funny fat motor man made of tires, shown in little marginal drawings and tailpieces in all the picturesque dilemmas of the road, becomes

a wonderfully real personality on short acquaintance. We learned to love the merry Michelin man, and never grew tired of sharing his joys and misfortunes.

Clermont-Ferrand is also the home of a man with two wooden legs that need oiling. I know, for he conducted us to the cathedral, and his joints squeaked dismally at every step. I said I would go back to the car and get the oil can, but he paid no attention to the suggestion. He also objected to the tip I gave him, though I could not see why an incomplete guide like that, especially one not in good repair, should expect double rates. Besides, his cathedral was not the best. It was not built of real stone, but of blocks of lava from the *puys* of the neighborhood.

We came near getting into trouble descending a hill to Vichy. The scene there was very beautiful. Vichy and the river and valley below present a wonderful picture. Absorbed in it, I was only dimly conscious of an old woman trudging along at our left, and did not at all notice a single chicken quite on the opposite side. In any case I could not well know that it was her chicken, or that it was so valuable that she would risk her life to save it. She was a very old person—in the neighborhood of several hundred, I should think, wearing an improperly short skirt, her legs the size and shape of a tightly folded umbrella, terminating below in the largest pair of wooden shoes in the world. Familiar with the habits of chickens, she probably thought her property would wait till we were opposite and then start to race across in front of the car. To prevent this she

decided to do it herself! Yet I suppose if I had damaged that prehistoric old lady, instead of missing her by the breadth of half a hair, her relatives would have made us pay for her at fancy rates.

We did not tarry at Vichy. It is a gay place—stylish and costly, and worth seeing a little, when one can drive leisurely through its clean, handsome streets. Perhaps if we could have invented any maladies that would have made a "cure" necessary we might have lingered with those other sallow, sad-eyed, stylish-looking people who collect in the pavilions where the warm healing waters come bubbling up and are dispensed free for the asking. But we are a healthy lot, and not stylish. We drove about for a pleasant hour, then followed along evening roads to St. Germain des Fosses, where the Hôtel du Porc was a wayside inn of our kind, with clean, quiet rooms, good food—and prices, oh, very moderate indeed! But I do wonder why garages are always put in such inconvenient places. I have driven in and backed out of a good many in my time, and I cannot now recall more than one or two that were not tucked away in an alley or around some impossible corner, making it necessary to scrape and writhe and cringe to get in and out without damaging something. I nearly knocked a corner from an out-house in St. Germain, backing out of its free and otherwise satisfactory garage.

Chapter XIV

BETWEEN BILLY AND BESSEY

TO those tourists who are looking for out-of-the-way corners of Europe I commend Billy. It is not pronounced in our frivolous way, but "Bee-yee," which you see gives it at once the French dignity. I call Billy "out-of-the-way" because we saw no tourists in the neighborhood, and we had never before heard of the place, which has a bare three-line mention in Baedeker.

Billy is on the Allier, a beautiful river, and, seen from a distance, with its towering ruin, is truly picturesque. Of course the old castle is the chief feature of Billy—a ruin of great extent, and unrestored! The last item alone makes it worth seeing. A good many of the ruins of France have been restored under the direction of that great recreator of the architectural past, Viollet le Duc, who has done his work supremely well and thoroughly—oh, thoroughly, no name! I am glad he did it, for it means preservation for the ages, but I am so glad that there is now and then a ruin that

> Monsieur V. le Duc
> Happened to overlook.

I even drift into bad poetry when I think of it.

The Château de Billy seems to have been built

about 1232 by one of the sires of Bourbon Robert of Clermont, son of St. Louis, to control the river traffic. It was a massive edifice of towers and bastions, and walls of enormous thickness. A good portion of the walls and some of the towers still stand. And there is a dungeon into which no light or air could come, once used to convince refractory opposition. They put a man in there for an hour. When they took him out he was either convinced or dead, and so, in either case, no longer troublesome.

The guardian of Billy was a little old woman as picturesque as the ruins, and lived in a little house across the way, as picturesque as herself. When we had seen the castle she let us look into her house. It consisted of just one small room with a tiny stove in one corner and a bed in the other. But the stove, with its accessories of pans and other ware all so shining and neat, and her tiny, high-posted, canopied bed so spotless and pretty with its white counterpane and gay little curtains, set us to wondering why anybody in the world needed a home more ample or attractive than that.

It seemed amusing to us that the name of the next place along that route should be Bessey. We lunched between Billy and Bessey, on a green level roadside, under some big trees, where there was a little stream which furnished our cooking water. It is not always easy to select the luncheon place. A dry spot with water and shade is not everywhere to be had, and then we do not always instantly agree on the conveniences of a place, and while we are discussing it we are going right along at a fifteen or twenty-mile

rate and that place has drifted a mile or two behind before the conference ends. But there always *is* a place somewhere that has most of the things we want, and it lies around the next turn or over the next hill, and it is always so new and strange and foreign, so away and away from the world we have known, so intimately a part of a land and of lives we have never seen before and shall never see again.

A gypsy of very poor class came along while we were at luncheon. His little wagon-house was quite bare of furnishings. The man walked outside beside the meager donkey—a young woman with a baby sat on the floor in the wagon.

Gypsies, by the way, are an institution in France. The French call them *nomades*, and provide them with special ordinances and road limitations. At first, when we saw signs "*Limites de Nomades*" in the outskirts of villages we wondered what was meant, and did not associate the notice with the comfortable and sometimes luxurious house-wagons that we met or overtook, or found solidly established by some pleasant waterside. Then it dawned upon us that these gypsy folk were the *nomades* and that the signs were provided for their instruction.

We met them, presently, everywhere. France, with its level roads and liberal laws, is gypsy heaven. A house on wheels, a regular little flat, with parlor, bedroom and kitchen, big enough to hold a family and its belongings, can be drawn by a single horse over the hard, perfectly graded highways. They work north in the summer, no doubt, and in the autumn the Midi calls them. Every little way we

saw them camped, working at their basketry or some kindred industry. Not all the villages limit them, and often we found them located in the midst of a busy town. I do not think they do any harm, and I always envied them. Some of their little houses are so cozy and neat, with tiny lace curtains and flower pots, and pictures on the walls. When we first saw such wagons we thought they belonged to artists.

Chapter XV

THE HAUTE-LOIRE

THE particular day of which I am now writing was Sunday, and when we came to Moulin, the ancient capital of the Bourbonnais, there was a baptismal ceremony going on in the cathedral; the old sexton in the portico outside was pulling the rope that led up to the great booming bell. He could pull and talk too, and he told us that the bell was only rung for baptisms, at least that was what we thought he said as he flung himself aloft with the upward sweep, and alow with the downward sweep, until his chin nearly touched the stone floor. I got into the swing of it directly, and signified that I should like to ring the bell a little myself. I realize now that it was decidedly brazen to ask to assist at a sacred function like that, but he let me do it, and I took the rope and for a minute or two swayed up and down in a pride I can hardly express, ringing that five-hundred-year-old bell to notify the world of the latest baptism in France.

We came upon an unexpected treat at Moulin—the Souvigny bible, an illuminated manuscript of 1115, with one hundred and twenty-two marvelously executed pictorial designs. The bible was in a museum across from the cathedral, a splendid museum indeed for little Moulin, being the reconstructed

château of the Bourbons, filled with beautiful things of the Bourbon period. The bible is in a room by itself in a glass case, but the guardian opened it for us and turned the leaves. This bible, discovered at the old priory of the little town of Souvigny, is in perfect condition and presents a gorgeous piece of hand illumination. The drawing itself is naturally primitive, but the coloring is rich beyond telling, the lettering marvelously perfect. J. Pierpont Morgan is said to have offered a million francs for the Souvigny bible, a vast sum to little Moulin. I am glad they did not sell it. It seems better in the quiet, choice museum which was once the castle of the Bourbon dukes.

It is curious how conventions establish themselves in the different districts and how absolutely they prevail in the limits of those districts. In certain sections, for instance, we found the furnishings in each hotel exactly alike. The same chairs, the same little table, the same bedsteads and wardrobes, the same tableware. We could tell by the change of furnishing when we had reached a new district. A good portion of the Auvergne remains to us the "Land of Squatty Pitchers," because in every bedroom the water pitcher was a very short, very corpulent and saucy-looking affair that amused us each evening with its absurd shape. Then there were the big coffee bowls and spoons. They got larger and larger from Nîmes northward until we reached Issoire. There the bowls were really immense and the spoons had grown from dessert spoons to table spoons, from table spoons to soup spoons until at

Issoire they were like enormous vegetable spoons, such as cooks use to stir the pot with. From Moulin northward we entered the "Land of Little Ladders." All the houses outside the larger towns were story-and-a-half affairs, built facing the road, and the half-story was not reached by an inside stairway, but by a short outside ladder that led up to a central gable window, which was really a door. It was curious to see a string of these houses, all with the little ladders, and all just alike. Our first thought was that the ladders were used because they were cheaper to build than a stairway, and saved inside room. But, reflecting later, I thought it more likely that they originated in the old need of defense. I think there was a time when the family retired to the loft at night and drew the ladder up after them, to avoid a surprise.

It had been raining softly when we left Moulin. Somehow we had strayed from the main road, and through the misty mid-region of the Haute-Loire followed ways uncharted, but always good—always interesting, and somewhere in that lost borderland we came to Dornes, and the daintiest inn, kept by the daintiest gray-haired woman, who showed us her kitchen and her flower garden and her tame pheasants, and made us love her dearly. Next day at St. Pierre le Moutier we got back on our route, and when Narcissa, out of the book she had been reading, reminded us that Joan of Arc had once fought a battle there the place became glorified. Joan must have been at Nevers, too, though we found no record of it.

I think we should have stayed longer at Nevers.

There was an ancient look about portions of it that in a brighter day would have invited us. Crossing the Loire and entering the city, with its ancient bastioned walls, carried one back a good way into the centuries. But it was still dull and drizzly, and we had a feeling for the open road and a cozier lodgment.

The rain ceased, the sun tried to break through the mist. The glistening world became strangely luminous, a world not of hard realities at all. The shining river winding away into mystery; far valley reaches fading into haze; blurred lines of ancient spires and towers—these things belonged only to a land of romance. Long ago I saw a painting entitled a dream of Italy. I did not believe then that any real land could be as beautiful—I thought it only an artist's vision. I was mistaken. No painting was ever so beautiful—so full of richness and light and color as this haze-haunted valley of the Loire.

We rested at Neuvy, at the little red-book inn, Hôtel de la Paix, clean and inviting like the rest. It is the best compliment we can pay these little hotels that we always want to remain in them longer, and plan some day to come back to them.

Chapter XVI

NEARING PARIS

THERE are more fine-looking fishing places in France than in any country I ever saw. There are also more fishermen. In every river town the water-fronts are lined with them. They are a patient lot. They have been sitting there for years, I suppose, and if they have ever caught anything the fact has been concealed. I have talked with numbers of them, but when I came to the question of their catch they became vague, not to say taciturn. "*Pas grande chose*" ("No great thing"), has been the reply, and there was no exhibit. I have never seen one of those fishermen get a nibble.

But the water is certainly seductive. Following the upper Loire from Neuvy to Gien, I was convinced that with a good rod I could stop almost anywhere and fill the car. Such attractive eddies, such fascinating, foam-flecked pools! Probably it is just as well I did not have the rod. I like to persuade myself that the fish were there.

Gien on the Loire is an old place, but not much that is old remains. Joan of Arc stopped there on her way to the king at Chinon, and it was from Gien, following the delivery of Orléans and the battle of Patay, that she set out with Charles VII for the

coronation at Rheims. But there are no Joan relics in Gien to-day. There are, however, two interesting features here: the two-story wells and the hard-working dogs. The wells have a curb reaching to the second story, with an opening below for the down-stairs tenants. It seems a good idea, and the result is picturesque. The dogs are hitched to little wagons and the Giennese—most of whom seem to be large and fat—first load those wagons and then get in themselves and ride. We saw one great hulk of a man approaching in what at first seemed to be some sort of a go-cart. It was not until he got close up that we discovered the dog—a little sweltering dog, his eyes popping out, his tongue nearly dragging the ground. I think the people of Gien are lazy and without shame.

We missed the road leaving Gien and wandered off into narrow, solid little byways that led across fields and along hedges, through hillside villages where never a stone had been moved, I think, in centuries. Once we turned into what seemed a beautiful wood road, but it led to a grand new château and a private drive which had a top dressing of deep soft sand. Fortunately nobody was at home, for we stalled in the sand and the head of the family and Narcissa and the Joy were obliged to get out and push while I put on all backing power and made tracks in that new sand that would have horrified the owner. We are the right sort, however. We carefully repaired the scars, then made tracks of another kind, for remoter districts.

Miles away from anywhere, by a pool at the edge

"Through Hillside Villages Where Never a Stone Had Been Moved, I Think, in Centuries"

of a field of bushes, we established a luncheon place, and in a seclusion of vines and shrubbery the Joy set up a kitchen and made coffee and boiled eggs and potatoes and "kept house" for an hour or so, to her heart's content. We did not know where we were, or particularly care. We knew that the road would lead somewhere, and that somewhere would be a wayside village with a little hotel that had been waiting for us ever so long, with inviting comforts and generous hospitality. Often we said as we drove along, "What little hotel do you suppose is waiting for us to-night?" But we did not worry, for we always knew we should find it.

The "little hotel" this time proved to be at Souppes on the Loing, and if I had to award a premium to any of the little hotels that thus far had sheltered us, I think I should give it to the Hôtel du Mouton, Souppes. The name naturally amused us, and we tried to make jokes out of it, but the dainty rooms and the delicious dinner commanded only our approval. Also the price; nineteen francs and forty centimes, or less than four dollars, for our party of four, dinner, lodging, and breakfast, garage free.

Souppes is a clean town, with a wide central street. Most of the towns up this way were cleaner than those of the farther south. Also, they had better buildings, as a rule. I mean the small towns. Villages not large enough even to be set down on the map have churches that would do credit in size and luxury to New York City. Take Bonny, for instance. We halted there briefly to watch some quaintly dressed people who were buying and selling at a little

butter and egg market, and then we noticed a big, gray, ancient-looking church somewhat farther along. So we went over there and wandered about in its dim coolness, and looked at its beautiful treasures—among them the fine marble statue of Joan which one meets to-day in most of the churches in France. How could Bonny, a mere village, ever have built a church like that—a church that to-day would cost a million dollars?

Another thing we noticed up this way was the "sign of the bush." Here and there along the road and in the villages there would be a house with an upward-slanting hole in the outside wall, about half-way to the eaves, and in the hole a branch of a tree, usually evergreen. When we had seen a few of these we began to wonder as to their meaning. Then we noticed that houses with those branches were all cafés, and some one suddenly remembered a proverb which says, "A good wine needs no bush," and how, in a former day, at least, the sign of the bush had indicated a wine shop. That it still does so in France became more and more evident as we went along. Every wine shop had its branch of green. I do not think there was one along that road that considered its wine superior to the traditional announcement.

Just outside of Souppes there is a great flinty rock upon which some prehistoric race used to sharpen knives. I suppose it was back before Cæsar's time, but in that hard stone, so hard that my own knife would not scratch it, the sharpening grooves and surfaces are as fresh as if those old fellows had left

there only yesterday. I wish I could know how they looked.

We came to the woods of Fontainebleau and ate our luncheon in its deep lucent shade. There is romance in the very name of Fontainebleau, but we would return later to find it. We drove a little through the wide avenues of that splendid forest that for three centuries or more was a hunting ground and pleasure park for kings, then we headed away for Juvisy on the Seine, where we spent the night and ate on a terrace in the open air, in a company not altogether to our liking—it being rather noisy, rather flashy, rather unwholesome—in a word, Parisian. We had left the region of simple customs and unpretentious people. It was not a pleasant change.

Also, we had left the region of good roads. All that I have said about the perfection of French roads I wish to retract, so far as those in the environs of Paris are concerned. Leaving Juvisy, we were soon on what is called the "pave," a road paved with granite blocks, poorly laid to begin with, and left unrepaired for years. It is full of holes and humps and wallows, and is not really a road at all, but a stone quarry on a jamboree. We jiggled and jumped and bumped, and only by going at the slowest permissible speed could stand it. Cars passed us going quite fast, but I could see that their occupants were not enjoying themselves. They were holding on to the backs of the seats, to the top supports, to one another. They were also tearing their cars to pieces, though the average Frenchman does not mind that. I love France, and every Frenchman is my friend,

but I do not wish him to borrow my car. He drives helter-skelter, lickety-split, and never takes care of his car at all. When the average Frenchman has owned a car a year it is a rusty, smoking, clattering box of tinware, ready for the can-heap.

Chapter XVII

SUMMING UP THE COST

THE informed motorist does not arrive at the gates of Paris with a tankful of gasoline. We were not informed, and when the *octroi* officials had measured our tank they charged us something like four dollars on its contents. The price of gasoline is higher inside, but not that much higher, I think. I did not inquire, for our tankful lasted us the week of our stay.

To tell the truth, we did but little motoring in Paris. For one thing, the streets are just a continuation of the pave, and then the traffic regulations are defective. I mean there are no regulations. It's just a go-as-you-please, each one for himself. Push, crowd, get ahead of the fellow in front of you —that is the rule. Here and there a *gendarme* stands waving his arms and shouting, "*Sacre bleu!*" but nobody pays the least attention to him. The well-trained American motorist finds his hair getting gray after an hour or two of that kind of thing.

But we enjoyed Paris, though I am not going to tell about it. No one attempts to tell of Paris any more—it has all been told so often. But I may hint to the conservative motorist that below the Seine, in the neighborhood of the Luxembourg Gardens, about where the rue de Vaugirard crosses the Boule-

vard St. Michel, he will find choice little hotels, with rooms very moderate indeed.

And perhaps here is a good place to speak of the cost of our travel. We had stinted ourselves in nothing except style. We had traveled leisurely, happily, enjoying everything to the full, and our average expense was a trifle less than forty francs a day—that is, eight dollars for four persons and the car. Our bill each day at the little hotels for dinner, lodging, and *petit déjeuner* (rolls, coffee, and jam) averaged about twenty-two francs, garage free.[1] That, of course, is absurdly cheap.

The matter of gasoline is different. "*Essence*," or benzine, as they call it, is high in Europe, and you would think it was some fine liqueur, the way they handle it. They put it up in sealed five-liter cans, and I have seen motorists, native motorists, buy one can—a trifle more than a gallon—probably fearing evaporation, or that somebody would rob the tank. One of those cans cost us about fifty cents, and, being of extra refined quality, it would carry us on French roads between eighteen and twenty miles. Sixty miles a day was about our average, which is aplenty for sight-seeing, even for an American. Our gasoline and oil expense came to about eight francs a day. The remainder of our eight dollars went for luncheon by the roadside and for tips. The picnic luncheon—bread and butter (deli-

[1] It was oftener from sixteen to eighteen francs, but the time when we stopped at larger towns, like Le Puy, Lyons, and Valence, brought up the average. These are antewar prices. I am told there is about a 50-per-cent increase (on the dollar basis) to-day. The value of the French franc is no longer a fixed quantity.

cious unsalted butter), jam, eggs, tinned meats, cheese, sausage, etc.—rarely cost to exceed four francs, and was usually cheaper. Our hotel tips were about 10 per cent of the bill, which is the correct amount, and was always satisfactory. When one gives more he gains nothing but servility, and makes it difficult for those who follow him. On the other hand an American cannot give less and keep his self-respect. There were usually but two servants at little inns, a waitress and a chambermaid. They were entitled to a franc each, and the boy at the garage to another. Two or three francs a day was quite enough for incidental tips at churches, ruined castles, and the like, unless there should be a fee, which would naturally be reckoned outside the regular budget. In any case, such fees were small and infrequent. I think I will add a brief summary of the foregoing figures which I seem to have strung along in a rather loose, confusing way.

SUMMARY

AVERAGE DAILY COST OF MOTORING FOR FOUR PERSONS, 1914

Average daily cost of		dinner, lodging, and breakfast	22	francs	($4.40)
"	"	" gasoline and oil	8	"	(1.60)
"	"	" roadside luncheon	4	"	(.80)
"	"	" tips at hotel	3	"	(.60)
"	"	for sight-seeing	3	"	(.60)
		Total	40	francs	($8.00)

That was reasonable motor travel, and our eight

dollars bought as much daily happiness as any party of four is likely to find in this old world.[1]

Another thing I wish to record in this chapter is the absolute squareness we found everywhere. At no hotel was there the slightest attempt to misrepresent, to ring in extras, to encourage side-adventures in the matter of wines or anything of the sort. We had been led to believe that the motorist was regarded as fair game for the continental innkeeper. Possibly there were localities where this was true, but I am doubtful. Neither did the attendants gather hungrily around at parting. More than once I was obliged to hunt up our waitress, or to leave her tip with the girl or man who brought the bags. The conclusion grew that if the motorist is robbed and crucified in Europe, as in the beginning a friend had prophesied we should be, it is mainly because he robs and crucifies himself.

[1] The reader must continue to bear in mind that this was in a golden age. The cost would probably be nearer 150 francs to-day (1921), or $12 American money. Even so, it would be cheaper than staying at home, in America.

Chapter XVIII

THE ROAD TO CHERBOURG

IT is easy enough to get into almost any town or city, but it is different when you start to leave it. All roads lead to Rome, but there is only here and there one that leads out of it. With the best map in the world you can go wrong.

We worked our way out of Paris by the Bois de Boulogne, but we had to call on all sorts of persons for information before we were really in the open fields once more. A handsome young officer riding in the Bois gave us a good supply. He was one of the most polite persons I ever met; also, the most loquacious. The sum of what he told us was to take the first turn to the right, but he told it to us for fully five minutes, with all the variations and embroideries of a young and lively fancy that likes to hear itself in operation. He explained how the scenery would look when we had turned to the right; also how it would continue to look when there was no longer a necessity of turning in either direction and what the country would be in that open land beyond the Bois. On the slightest provocation I think he would have ridden with us, even into Cherbourg. He was a boon, nevertheless, and we were truly grateful.

Beyond the Bois de Boulogne lay the *pave*, miles

of it, all as bad as it could be. Sometimes we could not really tell when we were in the road. Once I found myself on a sort of private terrace without knowing how I got there or how to get down. We went through St. Germain, but we did not stop. We wished to get far from Paris—back to the simple life and good roads. It was along the Seine, at last, that we found them and the quiet villages. Imagine the luxury of following a silent, tranquil road by that placid stream, through the sweetness of a May afternoon. Imagine the peace of it after the jar and jolt and clatter and dazzle of detestable, adorable Paris.

I am sorry not to be able to recommend the hotel at Rosny. For a time it looked as if it were going to be one of the best of our selections, but it did not turn out so. When we found a little toy garden at the back, our rooms a string of tiny one-story houses facing it, with roses blooming at every doorway, we were delighted. Each of us had a toy house to himself, and there was another for the car at the back. It was a real play place, and we said how nice it was and wished we might stay a good while. Then we went for a walk down to the river and in the sunset watched a curious ferryboat run back and forth on a wire, taking over homefaring teams, and some sheep and cattle, to the village on the farther bank of the little, but historic, river. In the early gloaming we walked back to our hotel.

The dinner was very good—all dinners in France are that—but alas for our pretty playhouse rooms! When candles were brought in we saw what I had

begun to suspect from the feeling, the walls were damp—worse, they were soaked—almost dripping. It seems they were built against a hill and the recent rains had soaked them through. We could not risk it—the landlady must give us something in the main house. She was a good soul—full of regrets, even grief. She had not known about those walls, she said, and, alas! she had no rooms in the main house. When we insisted that she *must* find *something*, she admitted that there was, indeed, just one room, but so small, so humble—fine folk like us could never occupy it.

She was right about its being small, but she was wrong in thinking we could not occupy it. She brought in cots and bedding, and when we were all in place at last we just about filled it from side to side. Still, it was dry and ventilated; those other places had been neither. But it seemed to us amusing that our fine pretension of a house apiece opening on a garden had suddenly dwindled to one inconsiderable room for the four of us.

We were in Normandy, now, and enjoying it. Everything was quite different from the things of the south. The picturesque thatched-roof houses; the women in dainty caps, riding on donkeys, with great brass milk jugs fore and aft; the very ancient cross-timber architecture; those, to us, were new things in France.

The architecture and some of the costumes were not new to one who had visited England. William the Norman must have carried his thatched-roof and cross-timber architecture across the Channel; also, certain dresses and smocks and the pattern of the

men's whiskers. In some of these towns one might almost believe himself in rural England.

Lisieux, especially, is of the type I mean. It has a street which might be in Shrewsbury, though I think the Shrewsbury houses would not be as old as those of Lisieux, one of which—"The House of the Salamander"—so called from the decoration on its carved façade—we were permitted to visit. Something about it gave me more the feeling of the ancient life than I have found in most of the castles. Perhaps because it is wood, and wood holds personality longer than stone.

There is an old church at Lisieux, and it has a chapel built by Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, who hounded Joan of Arc to the stake. Cauchon earned the Beauvais appointment by convicting Joan, but later, especially after Joan had been rehabilitated, he became frightened of the entertainment which he suspected Satan was preparing for him and built this chapel in expiation, hoping to escape the fire. It is a beautiful chapel, but I think Cauchon wasted his money. If he didn't there is something wrong with justice.

The Normandy road to Cherbourg is as wonderful as any in France. All the way it is lined with trees, and it goes straight on, mile after mile, up hill and down—long, long hills that on the approach look as if they reached to the sky, but that flatten out when you get to them, and offer a grade so gradual and a surface so smooth that you need never shift your speed levers. Workmen are always raking and touching up those roads. We had something more

than two days of them, and if the weather had not been rather windy and chilly out on that long peninsula the memory of that run would be about perfect.

Cherbourg is not the great city we had imagined it to be. It is simply a naval base, heavily fortified, and a steamer landing. Coming in on the Paris road you are in the center of activities almost as soon as you reach the suburbs and there is none of the crush of heavy traffic that one might expect. There is a pleasant beach, too, and if travelers were not always going somewhere else when they arrive at Cherbourg, the little city might become a real resort. We were there a week before our ship came in, then sailed out one quiet June evening on the harbor tender to meet the missing member and happily welcome her to France. Our hotel had a moving-picture show in the open air, and we could look down on it from our windows. The Joy especially liked this, and we might have stayed there permanently, but the long roads and still unvisited glories of France were calling.

Chapter XIX

BAYEUX, CAEN, AND ROUEN

WE had barely hesitated at Bayeux on the way to Cherbourg, but now we stopped there for the night. Bayeux, which is about sixty miles from Cherbourg, was intimately associated with the life of William the Conqueror, and is to-day the home of the famous Bayeux tapestry, a piece of linen two hundred and thirty feet long and eighteen inches wide, on which is embroidered in colored wools the story of William's conquest of England.

William's queen, Matilda, is supposed to have designed this marvelous pictorial document, and even executed it, though probably with the assistance of her ladies. Completed in the eleventh century, it would seem to have been stored in the Bayeux cathedral, where it lay scarcely remembered for a period of more than six hundred years. Then attention was called to its artistic and historic value, and it became still more widely known when Napoleon brought it to Paris and exhibited it at the Louvre to stir the French to another conquest of England. Now it is back in Bayeux, and has a special room in the museum there, and a special glass case, so arranged that you can walk around it and see each of its fifty-eight tableaux.

It was the closing hour when we got to the Bayeux

museum, but the guardian gave us plenty of time to walk around and look at all the marvelous procession of horses and men whose outlines have remained firm and whose colors have stayed fresh for more than eight hundred years.

Matilda was ahead of her time in art. She was a futurist—anybody can see that who has been to one of the later exhibitions. But she was exactly abreast in the matter of history. It is likely that she embroidered the events as they were reported to her, and her records are above price to-day. I suppose she sat in a beautiful room with her maids about her, all engaged at the great work, and I hope she looked as handsome as she looks in the fine painting of her which hangs above the case containing her masterpiece.

There is something fine and stirring about Matilda's tapestry. No matter if Harold does seem to be having an attack of pleurisy when he is only putting on his armor, or if the horses appear to have detachable legs. Matilda's horses and men can get up plenty of swift action on occasion, and the events certainly do move. Tradition has it that the untimely death of the queen left the tapestry unfinished, for which reason William's coronation does not appear. I am glad we stopped at Bayeux. I would rather have seen Matilda's faithfully embroidered conquest than a whole gallery full of old masters.

Next day at Caen we visited her grave. It stands in a church which she herself founded in expiation of some fancied sin connected with her marriage. Her remains have never been disturbed. We also

visited the tomb of the Conqueror, on the other side of the city at the church of St. Étienne. But the Conqueror's bones are not there now; they were scattered by the Huguenots in 1562.

We enjoyed Caen. We wandered about among its ancient churches and still more ancient streets. At one church a wedding was going on, and Narcissa and I lingered a little to assist. One does not get invited to a Normandy wedding every day, especially in the old town where William I organized his rabble to invade England. No doubt this bride and groom were descendants of some of William's wild rascals, but they looked very mild and handsome and modern to us. Narcissa and I attended quite a variety of ceremonials in the course of our travels: christenings, catechisms, song services, high mass, funerals—there was nearly always something going on in those big churches, and the chantings and intonings, and the candles, and the incense, and the processions and genuflections, and the robes of the priests and the costumes of the assemblages all interested us.

Caen became an important city under William the Conqueror. Edward III of England captured and pillaged it about the middle of the fourteenth century, at which time it was larger than any city in England, except London. It was from Caen that Charlotte Corday set out to assassinate Marat. To-day Caen has less than fifty thousand inhabitants and is mainly interesting for its art treasures and its memories.

We left the Paris-Cherbourg road at Caen. Our program included Rouen, Amiens, and Beauvais,

cathedral cities lying more to the northward. That night we lay at the little Norman village of Bourg-Achard, in an inn of the choicest sort, and next morning looked out of our windows on a busy cattle market, where men in clean blue smocks and women in neat black dresses and becoming headgear were tugging their beasts about, exhibiting them and discussing them—eating, meantime, large pieces of gingerbread and other convenient food. A near-by orchard was filled with these busy traders. At one place our street was lined with agricultural implements which on closer inspection proved to be of American manufacture. From Bourg-Achard to Rouen the distance seemed all too short—the road was so beautiful.

It was at Rouen that we started to trace backward the sacred footprints of Joan of Arc, saint and savior of France. For it is at Rouen that the pathway ends. When we had visited the great cathedral, whose fairy-like façade is one of the most beautiful in the world, we drove to a corner of the old Market Place, and stopped before a bronze tablet which tells that on this spot on a certain day in May, 1431 (it was the 29th), the only spotless soul in France, a young girl who had saved her country from an invading and conquering enemy, was burned at the stake. That was five hundred years ago, but time has not dulled the misery of the event, its memory of torture, its humiliation. All those centuries since, the nation that Joan saved has been trying to atone for her death. Streets have been named for her; statues have been set up for her in every church and in public

squares, but as we read that sorrowful tablet I could not help thinking that all of those honors together are not worth a single instant of her fiendish torture when the flames had found her tender flesh. Cauchon, later Bishop of Beauvais, her persecutor, taunted his victim to the last. If the chapel of expiation he built later at Lisieux saved him, then chapels must indeed be held in high esteem by those who confer grace.

Nothing is there to-day that was there then, but one may imagine an open market place thronged with people, and the horrid structure of death on which stood Joan while they preached to her of her sins. Her sins! when she was the only one among them that was not pitch black, steeped to the hair in villainy. Cauchon himself finished the sermon by excommunicating her, cutting off the church's promise of salvation. On her head she wore a cap on which was printed: HERETIC, RELAPSED, APOSTATE, IDOLATER. Cauchon had spared nothing to make her anguish complete. It is curious that he allowed her to pray, but he did, and when she prayed—not for herself, but for the king who had deserted her—for his glory and triumph, Cauchon himself summoned the executioners, and they bound her to the stake with chains and lighted the fire.

There is little more to see of Joan in Rouen. The cathedral was there in her time, but she was never permitted to enter it. There is a wall which was a part of the chapel where she had her final hearing before her judges; there are some houses which she must have passed, and there is a tower which belonged

to the castle in which she was confined, though it is not certain that it is Joan's tower. There is a small museum in it, and among its treasures we saw the manuscript article *St. Joan of Arc*, by Mark Twain, who, in his *Personal Recollections*, has left to the world the loveliest picture of that lovely life.

Chapter XX

WE COME TO GRIEF

IT was our purpose to leave Rouen by the Amiens road, but when we got to it and looked up a hill that about halfway to the zenith arrived at the sky, we decided to take a road that led off toward Beauvais. We could have climbed that hill well enough, and I wished later we had done so. As it was, we ran along quite pleasantly during the afternoon, and attended evening services in an old church at Grandvilliers, a place that we had never heard of before, but where we found an inn as good as any in Normandy.

It is curious with what exactness Fate times its conclusions. If we had left Grandvilliers a few seconds earlier or later it would have made all the difference, or if I had not pulled up a moment to look at a lovely bit of brookside planted with poplars, or if I had driven the least bit slower or the least bit faster, during the first five miles, or—

Oh, never mind—what happened was this: We had just mounted a long steep hill on high speed and I had been bragging on the car, always a dangerous thing to do, when I saw ahead of us a big two-wheeled cart going in the same direction as ourselves, and beyond it a large car approaching. I could have speeded up and cut in ahead of the cart, but I was feeling well, and I thought I should do the courteous

thing, the safe thing, so I fell in behind it. Not far enough behind him, however, for as the big car came opposite, the sleepy driver of the cart pulled up his horse short, and we were not far enough behind for me to get the brakes down hard and suddenly enough to stop before we touched him. It was not a smash. It was just a push, but it pushed a big hole in our radiator, mashed up one of our lamps, and crinkled up our left mud-guard. The radiator was the worst. The water poured out; our car looked as if it had burst into tears.

We were really stupefied at the extent of our disaster. The big car pulled up to investigate and console us. The occupants were Americans, too, from Washington—kindly people who wanted to shoulder some of the blame. Their chauffeur, a Frenchman, bargained with the cart driver who had wrecked us to tow us to the next town, where there were garages. Certainly pride goes before a fall. Five minutes before we were sailing along in glory, exulting over the prowess of our vehicle. Now all in the wink of an eye our precious conveyance, stricken and helpless, was being towed to the hospital, its owners trudging mournfully behind.

The village was Poix, and if one had to be wrecked anywhere, I cannot think of a lovelier spot for disaster than Poix de la Somme. It is just across in Picardy, and the Somme there is a little brook that ripples and winds through poplar-shaded pastures, sweet meadows, and deep groves. In every direction were the loveliest walks, with landscape pictures at every turn. The village itself was drowsy, kindly,

simple-hearted. The landlady at our inn was a motherly soul that during the week of our stay the Joy and I learned to love.

For the others did not linger. Paris was not far away and had a good deal in the way of shopping to recommend it. The new radiator ordered from London might be delayed. So early next morning they were off for Paris by way of Amiens and Beauvais, and the Joy and I settled down to such employments and amusements as we could find, while waiting for repairs.

We got acquainted with the garageman's family, for one thing. They lived in the same little court with the shop, and we exchanged Swiss French for their Picardese, and were bosom friends in no time. We spruced up the car, too, and every day took long walks, and every afternoon took some luncheon and our little stove and followed down the Somme to a tiny bridge, and there made our tea. Then sometimes we read, and once when I was reading aloud from Mark Twain's *Joan of Arc*, and had finished the great battle of Patay, we suddenly remembered that it had happened on the very day on which we were reading, the 18th of June. How little we guessed that in such a short time our peaceful little river would give its name to a battle a thousand times greater than any that Joan ever fought!

Once when we were resting by the roadside a little old lady with a basket stopped and sat with us while she told us her history—how her husband had been a great physician and invented cures that to-day are used in all the hospitals of France. Now she

was poor, she said, and lived alone in a little house, but if we would visit her she would give us some good Picardese cooking. I wish we might have gone. One day I hired a bicycle for the Joy and entertained the village by pushing her around the public square until she learned to ride alone. Then I hired one for myself and we went out on the road together. About the end of the third day we began to look for our radiator, and visited the express office with considerable regularity. Presently the village knew us, why we were there and what we were expecting. They became as anxious about it as ourselves.

Chapter XXI

THE DAMAGE REPAIRED—BEAUVAIS AND COMPIÈGNE

ONE morning as we started toward the express office a man in a wagon passed and called out something. We did not catch it, but presently another met us and with a glad look told us that our goods had arrived and were now in the delivery wagon on the way to the garage. We did not recognize either of those good souls, but they were interested in our welfare. Our box was at the garage when we arrived there, and in a little more it was opened and the new radiator in place. The other repairs had been made, and once more we were complete. We decided to start next morning to join the others in Paris.

Morning comes early on the longest days of the year, and we had eaten our breakfast, had our belongings put into the car, and were ready to be off by seven o'clock. What a delicious morning it was! Calm, glistening, the dew on everything. As long as I live I shall remember that golden morning when the Joy, aged eleven, and I went gypsying together, following the winding roads and byways that led us through pleasant woods, under sparkling banks, and along the poplar-planted streams of Picardy. We did not keep to highways at all. We were in no hurry and we took any lane that seemed to lead in the right direction,

so that much of the time we appeared to be crossing fields—fields of flowers, many of them, scarlet poppies, often mingled with blue cornflowers and yellow mustard—fancy the vividness of that color.

Traveling in that wandering fashion, it was noon before we got down to Beauvais, where we stopped for luncheon supplies and to see what is perhaps the most remarkable cathedral in the world. It is one of the most beautiful, and, though it consists only of choir and transepts, it is one of the largest. Its inner height, from floor to vaulting, is one hundred and fifty-eight feet. The average ten-story building could sit inside of it. There was once a steeple that towered to the giddy heights of five hundred feet, but in 1573, when it had been standing three hundred years, it fell down, from having insufficient support. The inner work is of white stone, marble, and the whole place seems filled with light. It was in this cool, heavenly sanctuary that Cauchon, who hounded Joan to the stake, officiated as bishop. I never saw a place so unsuited to a man. I should think that spire would have tumbled off then instead of waiting until he had been dead a hundred years. There is a clock in this church—a modern clock—that records everything, even the age of the world, which at the moment of our visit was 5,914 years. It is a very large affair, but we did not find it very exciting. In the public square of Beauvais there is a bronze statue of Jeanne Laine, called "Jeanne Hachette," because, armed with a hatchet, she led others of her sex against Charles the Bold in 1472 and captured a banner with her own hands.

Beauvais has many interesting things, but the day had become very warm and we did not linger. We found some of the most satisfactory pastries I have ever seen in France, fresh and dripping with richness; also a few other delicacies, and, by and by, under a cool apple tree on the road to Compiègne, the Joy and I spread out our feast and ate it and listened to some little French birds singing, "*Vite! Vite! Vite!*" meaning that we must be "Quick! Quick! Quick!" so they could have the crumbs.

It was at Compiègne that Joan of Arc was captured by her enemies, just a year before that last fearful day at Rouen. She had relieved Orléans, she had fought Patay, she had crowned the king at Rheims; she would have had her army safely in Paris if she had not been withheld by a weakling, influenced by his shuffling, time-serving counselors. She had delivered Compiègne the year before, but now again it was in trouble, besieged by the Duke of Burgundy. Joan had been kept in partial inactivity in the Loire district below Paris during the winter, but with the news from Compiègne she could no longer be restrained.

"I will go to my good friends of Compiègne," she said, and, taking such force as she could muster, in number about six hundred cavalry, she went to their relief.

From a green hill commanding the valley of the Oise we looked down upon the bright river and pretty city which Joan had seen on that long-ago afternoon of her final battle for France. Somewhere on that plain the battle had taken place, and Joan's little force for the first time had failed. There had been

a panic; Joan, still fighting and trying to rally her men, had been surrounded, dragged from her horse, and made a prisoner. She had led her last charge.

We crossed a bridge and entered the city and stopped in the big public square facing Leroux's beautiful statue of Joan, which the later "friends of Compiègne" have raised to her memory. It is Joan in semi-armor, holding aloft her banner, and on the base in old French is inscribed "*Je Yray voir mes bons amys de Compiègne*" ("I will go to see my good friends of Compiègne").

Many things in Compiègne are beautiful, but not many of them are very old. Joan's statue looks toward the handsome and richly ornamented Hôtel de Ville, but Joan could not have seen it in life, for it dates a hundred years after death. There are two handsome churches, in one or both of which she doubtless worshiped when she had first delivered the city; possibly a few houses of that ancient time still survive.

We looked into the churches, but they seemed better on the outside. Then I discovered that one of our back tires was down, and we drew up in a secluded nook at the rear of St. Jacques for repairs. It was dusk by the time we had finished, the end of that long June day, and we had no time to hunt for a cozy inn. So we went to a hotel which stands opposite the great palace which the architect Gabriel built for Louis XV, and looked across to it while we ate our dinner, and talked of our day's wanderings, and of palaces in general and especially queens; also of Joan, and of the beautiful roads and fields of

flowers, and of the little birds that tried to hurry us along, and so were very happy and very tired indeed.

Next morning we visited the palace. It has been much occupied by royalty, for Compiègne was always a favorite residence of the rulers of France. Napoleon came there with the Empress Marie Louise, and Louis Philippe and Napoleon III both found retirement there.

I think it could not have been a very inviting or restful home. There are long halls and picture galleries, all with shiny floors and stiffly placed properties, and the royal suites are just a series of square, prettily decorated and upholstered boxes, strung together, with doors between. One might as well set up a series of screens in a long hall. Even with the doors shut there could not have been much sense of privacy, certainly none of snugness. But then palaces were not meant to be cozy. We saw the bedrooms and dressing rooms and what not of the various queens, and we looked from an upper window down a long forest avenue that was finer than anything inside. Then we went back to the car and drove into the big forest for ten miles or more, to an old feudal castle—such a magnificent old castle, all towers and turrets and battlements—the château of Pierrefonds, one of the finest in France.

It stands upon a rocky height overlooking a lake, and it does not seem so old, though it had been there forty years when Joan of Arc came, and it looks as if it might be there about as long as the hill it stands on. It was built by Louis of Orléans, brother of Charles VI, and the storm of battle has raged often about its base. Here and there it still shows the mark

of bombardment, and two cannon balls stick fast in the wall of one of its solid towers. Pierrefonds was in bad repair, had become well-nigh a ruin, in fact, when Napoleon III, at his own expense, engaged Viollet le Duc to restore it, in order that France might have a perfect type of the feudal castle in its original form. It stands to-day as complete in its structure and decoration as it was when Louis of Orléans moved in, more than five hundred years ago, and it conveys exactly the solid home surroundings of the mediæval lord. It is just a show place now, and its vast court, its chapel and its halls of state are all splendid enough, though nothing inside can be quite so magnificent as its mighty assemblage of towers and turrets rising above the trees and reflecting in the blue waters of a placid lake.

It began raining before we got to Paris, so we did not stop at Crépy-en-Valois, or Senlis, or Chantilly, or St. Denis, though all that land has been famous for kings and castles and bloodshed from a time farther back than the days of Cæsar. We were interested in all those things, but we agreed we could not see everything. Some things we saw as we went by; great gray walls and crumbling church towers, and then we were at the gates of Paris and presently threading our way through a tangle of streets, barred, many of them, because the top of the subway had been tumbling in a few days before and travel was dangerous. It was Sunday, too, and the streets were especially full of automobiles and pedestrians. It was almost impossible to keep from injuring something. I do not care for Paris, not from the driving seat of a car.

Chapter XXII

FROM PARIS TO CHARTRES AND CHÂTEAUDUN

IN fact, neither the Joy nor I hungered for any more Paris, while the others had seen their fill. So we were off, with only a day's delay, this time taking the road to Versailles. There we put in an hour or two wandering through the vast magnificence of the palace where the great Louis XIV lived, loved, and died, and would seem to have spent a good part of his time having himself painted in a variety of advantageous situations, such as riding at the head of victorious armies, or occupying a comfortable seat in Paradise, giving orders to the gods.

They were weak kings who followed him. The great Louis reigned seventy-two years—prodigal years, but a period of military and artistic conquest—the golden age of French literature. His successor reigned long enough—fifty-nine years—but he achieved nothing worth while, and the next one lost his head. We saw the little balcony where the doomed Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette showed themselves to the mob—the "deluge" which the greater Louis had once predicted.

The palace at Versailles is like other royal palaces of France—a fine show place, an excellent museum, but never in its day of purest domesticity could it have been called "a happy little home." Everything

is on too extended a scale. Its garden was a tract of marshy land sixty miles in circumference until Louis XIV set thirty-six thousand men at it, turning it into fairyland. Laborers died by the score during the work, and each night the dead were carted away. When this was mentioned to the king he was troubled, fearing his supply of men might not last. However, the garden was somehow completed. Possibly Louis went out and dug in it a little himself.

It is still a Garden of Eden, with leafy avenues, and lakes, and marvelous fountains, and labyrinths of flowers. Looking out over it from the palace windows we remembered how the king had given Madame Maintenon a summer sleigh-ride, causing long avenues to be spread with sugar and salt to gratify her idly-expressed whim. I am sorry, of course, that the later Louis had to lose his head, but on the whole I think it is very well that France discouraged that line of kings.

Versailles is full of palaces. There is the Grand Trianon, which Louis XIV built for Madame Maintenon when she had grown weary of the great palace, and the Petit Trianon, which Louis XV gave to Du Barry and where Marie Antoinette built her Swiss village and played at farm life. There is no reason I should dwell on these places. Already volumes have been written of the tragic, gay, dissolute life they have seen, the gorgeous moving panoramas that might have been pictures passing in a looking-glass for all the substance they have left behind.

Somewhere below Versailles, in the quietest spot we could find, by a still stream that ran between the

meadow and the highroad, we made our luncheon and were glad we were not kings. Being royalty was a gaudy occupation, but too doubtful, too open to criticism. One of those Louis families, for instance, could never have stopped their motor by the roadside and prepared their luncheon in our modest, unostentatious way. They would have had all manner of attendants and guards watching them, and an audience would have collected, and some excited person might have thrown a brick and hit the jam. No, we would rather be just plain, unobtrusive people, without audience, and with no attendance but the car, waiting there in the shade to carry us deeper into this Land of Heart's Desire.

It was at Rambouillet that we lodged, an ancient place with a château and a vast park; also an excellent inn—the Croix Blanche—one of those that you enter by driving through to an inner court. Before dinner we took a walk into the park, along the lakeside and past the château, which is a curious architectural mixture and not very sightly. But it is mingled with history. Francis I died there in 1547, and as late as 1830 the last Charles, the tenth of that name, signed his abdication there.

It was too late for the place to be open, and in any case we did not care to go in. We had had enough of palaces for one day. We followed around the lake to an avenue of splendid Louisiana cypresses which some old king had planted. Beyond the avenue the way led into deeper wildernesses—a noble wood. We made a backward circuit at length, for it was evening and the light was fading. In the mysteri-

ous half-light there was something almost spectral in that sylvan place and we spoke in hushed voices. Presently we came to a sort of bower, and then to an artificial grotto—old trysting places. Ah, me! Monsieur and mademoiselle, or madame, are no longer there; the powdered hair, the ruffled waistcoat and looped gown, the silken hose and dainty footgear, the subdued laugh and whispered word, all have vanished. How vacant those old places seemed! We did not linger—it was a time for ghosts.

We were off next morning, halting for a little at Maintenon on the road to Chartres. The château attracted us and the beautiful river Eure. The widow of the poet Scarron, who married Louis XIV and became Marquise de Maintenon, owned the château, and it belongs to the family to this day. An attendant permitted us to see the picture gallery and a portion of the grounds. All seemed as luxurious as Versailles. It is thirty-five miles from Maintenon to Versailles, but Louis started to build an aqueduct to carry the waters of the Eure to his gardens. He kept thirty thousand soldiers working on it for four years, but they died faster than he could replace them, which was such a bother that he abandoned the undertaking.

Following the rich and lovely valley of the Eure, we came to Chartres, and made our way to the Cathedral square. We had seen the towers from a long distance, and remembered the saying that "The choir of Beauvais, the nave of Amiens, the portal of Rheims, and the towers of Chartres would together make the finest church in the world." To

confess the truth, I did not think the towers of Chartres as handsome as those of either Rouen or Amiens. But then I am not a purist in cathedral architecture. Certainly the cathedral itself is glorious. I shall not attempt to describe it. Any number of men have written books, trying to do that, and most of them have failed. I only know that the wonder of its architecture—the marvel of its relief carving, "lace in stone," and the sublime glory of its windows—somehow possessed us, and we did not know when to go. I met a woman once who said she had spent a month at Chartres and had put in most of it sitting in the cathedral looking at those windows. When she told me of it I had been inclined to be scornful. I was not so any more. Those windows, made by some unknown artist, dead five hundred years, invite a lifetime of contemplation.

It is about nine hundred years since the cathedral of Chartres was begun, and it has known many changes. Four hundred years ago one of its towers was rebuilt in an altogether different pattern from the other. I believe this variation is regarded as a special feature of their combined beauty. Chapels have been added, wings extended; changes inside and out were always going on during the first five hundred years or so, but if the builders made any mistakes we failed to notice them. It remains a unity, so far as we could see—a supreme expression of the old faith, whose material labor was more than half spiritual, and for whom no sacrifice of money or endeavor was too great.

We left Chartres by one of the old city gates, and

took the wrong road, and presently found ourselves in an open field, where our way dwindled out and stopped. Imagine a road good enough to be mistaken for a highway, leading only to a farmer's grainfield. So we went back and got set right, and through a heavenly June afternoon followed the straight level way to Châteaudun, an ancient town perched upon the high cliffs above the valley of the Loir, which is a different river from the Loire—much smaller and more picturesque.

The château itself hangs on the very edge of the cliffs with startling effect and looks out over a picture valley as beautiful as any in France. This was the home of Dunois, Bastard of Orléans, who left it to fight under Joan of Arc. He was a great soldier, one of her most loved and trusted generals. We spent an hour or more wandering through Dunois's ancient seat, with an old guardian who clearly was in love with every stone of it, and who time and again reminded us that it was more interesting than many of the great châteaux of the Loire, Blois especially, in that it had been scarcely restored at all. About the latest addition to Châteaudun was a beautiful open stairway of the sixteenth century, in perfect condition to-day. On the other side is another fine façade and stairway, which Dunois himself added. In a niche there stands a fine statue of the famous soldier, probably made from life. If only some sculptor or painter might have preserved for us the features of Joan!

Chapter XXIII

WE REACH TOURS

THROUGH that golden land which lies between the Loir and the Loire we drifted through a long summer afternoon and came at evening to a noble bridge that crossed a wide, tranquil river, beyond which rose the towers of ancient Tours, capital of Touraine. One can hardly cross the river Loire for the first time without long reflections. Henry James calls the Touraine "a gallery of architectural specimens . . . the heart of the old French monarchy," and adds, "as that monarchy was splendid and picturesque, a reflection of the splendor still glitters in the Loire. Some of the most striking events of French history have occurred on the banks of that river, and the soil it waters bloomed for a while with the flower of the Renaissance."

Touraine was a favorite place for kings, and the early Henrys and Francises, especially, built their magnificent country palaces in all directions. There are more than fifty châteaux within easy driving distance of Tours, and most of the great ones have been owned or occupied by Francis I, or by Henry II, or by one of their particular favorites.

We did not intend to visit all of the châteaux by any means, for château visiting, from a diversion may easily degenerate into labor. We intended

especially to visit Chinon, where Joan of Arc went to meet the king to ask for soldiers, and a few others, but we had no wish to put in long summer days mousing about old dungeons and dim corridors, or being led through stiffly set royal suites, garishly furnished and restored. It was better to glide restfully along the poppied way and see the landscape presentment of those stately piles crowning the hilltops or reflected in the bright waters of the Loire. The outward semblance of the land of romance remains oftenest undisturbed; cross the threshold and the illusion is in danger.

At the Central Hotel of Tours, an excellent place of modest charges, we made our headquarters, and next morning, with little delay, set out for Chinon and incidental châteaux. "Half the charm of the Loire," says James, "is that you can travel beside it." He was obliged to travel very leisurely beside it when that was written; the "flying carpet" had not then been invented, and James, with his deliberate locomotion, was sometimes unable to return to Tours for the night. I imagine he enjoyed it none the less for that, lazily watching the smooth water of the wide shallow stream, with never a craft heavier than a flat-bottomed hay boat; the wide white road, gay with scarlet poppies, and some tall purple flower, a kind of foxglove.

I do not remember that James makes mention of the cliff-dwellers along the Loire. Most of them live in houses that are older, I suspect, than the oldest château of Touraine. In the beginning there must have been in these cliffs natural caves occupied

by our earliest troglodyte ancestors. In time, as mentality developed and, with it, imagination, the original shelters were shaped and enlarged by excavation, also new ones built, until these perpendicular banks facing the Loire became the dwelling place for hundreds, even thousands.

They are still numerously inhabited. The rooms or houses—some of them may be flats—range one above the other in stories, all up the face of the cliff, and there are smoke-places and little chimneys in the fields at the top. Such houses must have been here before the kings came to Touraine. Some of them look very ancient; some have crumbled in; some have been faced with stone or plaster. The cliff is honeycombed with them. Do their occupants have traditional rights from some vague time without date? Do they pay rent, and to whom? We might have found the answers to these questions had we cared to seek for them. It seemed better to content oneself with speculation. We did not visit the cliff-dwellers of the Loire.

Neither did we visit the château of Luynes or of Langeais. Luynes is a fine old feudal pile on a hilltop just below Tours, splendid from the road, but it had no compelling history and we agreed that closer view could not improve it. Besides, it was hot, sizzling, for a climb; so hot that one of our aging tubes popped presently, and Narcissa and I had to make repairs in a place where there was a world of poppies, but no shade for a mile. That was one of the reasons we did not visit Langeais. Langeais was exactly on the road, but it had a hard, hot, forbidding

look. Furthermore, our book said that it had been restored and converted into a museum, and added that its chief claim on history lay in the fact that Anne of Brittany was here married to Charles VIII in 1491. That fact was fine to realize from the outside, under the cool shadow of those gray walls. One could lose it among shiny restorations and stuffy museum tapestries.

The others presently noticed a pastry shop opposite the château and spoke of getting something extra for luncheon. While they were gone I discovered a café below the château and, being pretty dry, I slipped down there for a little seltzer, or something. The door was open, but the place was empty. There was the usual display of bottles, but not a soul was in sight. I knocked, then called, but nobody came. I called and knocked louder, but nothing happened. Then I noticed some pennies lying by an empty glass on the bar. The amount was small and I left them there. A side door was open and I looked out into a narrow passage opening into a court at the back. I went out there, still signaling my distress. The sun was blazing and I was getting dryer every minute. Finally a stout, smiling woman appeared, wiping her hands—from the washtub, I judge. She went with me into the café, gathered up the loose change on the counter, and set out refreshments. Then she explained that I could have helped myself and left the money. Langeais is an honest community.

Following down the Loire we came to a bridge, and, crossing to the other bank, presently found ourselves

in a country where there were no visible houses at all. But there was shade, and we camped under it and I did some tire repairing while the others laid out the luncheon and set the little cooker going. Later we drowsed in the shade for an hour or more, with desultory talk of Joan, and of Anne of Brittany, and of the terrible Catherine de Medici, whose son the feeble Francis II had brought his young wife, Marie Stuart, the doomed Queen of Scots, to Chenonceaux for their honeymoon. It was strange to think that this was the environment of those half-romantic figures of history. Some of them, perhaps all, had passed this very spot. And so many others! the Henrys, the Charleses, the Louises—the sovereigns and soldiers and court favorites for four hundred years. What a procession—the pageant of the Renaissance!

Chapter XXIV

CHINON, WHERE JOAN MET THE KING, AND AZAY

CHINON is not on the Loire, but on a tributary a little south of it, the Vienne, its ruined castle crowning the long hill or ridge above the town. Sometime during the afternoon we came to the outskirts of the ancient place and looked up to the wreck of battlements and towers where occurred that meeting which meant the liberation of France.

We left the car below and started to climb, then found there was a road, a great blessing, for the heat was intense. There is a village just above the castle, and we stopped there.

The château of Chinon to-day is the remains of what originally was three châteaux, built at different times, but so closely strung together that in ruin they are scarcely divided. The oldest, Coudray, was built in the tenth century and still shows three towers standing, in one of which Joan of Arc lived during her stay at Chinon. The middle château is not as old by a hundred years. It was built on the site of a Roman fort, and it was in one of its rooms, a fragment of which still remains, that Charles VII received the shepherd girl from Domremy. The château of St. George was built in the twelfth century by Henry II of England, who died there in 1189.

Though built two hundred years after Coudray, nothing of it survives but some foundations.

Chinon is a much more extensive ruin than we had expected. Even what remains to-day must be nearly a quarter of a mile in length, and its vast crumbling walls and towers make it strikingly picturesque. But its ruin is complete, none the less. Once through the entrance tower and you are under nothing but the sky, with your feet on the grass; there is no longer a shelter there, even for a fugitive king. You wander about, viewing it scarcely more than as a ruin, at first, a place for painting, for seclusion, for dreaming in the sun. Then all at once you are facing a wall in which, halfway up where once was the second story, there is a restored fireplace and a tablet which tells you that in this room Charles VII received Joan of Arc. It is not a room now; it is just a wall, a fragment, with vines matting its ruined edges.

You cross a stone footbridge to the tower where Joan lived, and that, too, is open to the sky, and bare and desolate. Once, beyond it, there was a little chapel where she prayed. There are other fragments and other towers, but they merely serve as a setting for those which the intimate presence of Joan made sacred.

The Maid did not go immediately to the castle on her arrival in Chinon. She put up at an inn down in the town and waited the king's pleasure. His paltering advisers kept him dallying, postponing his consent to see her, but through the favor of his mother-in-law, Yolande, Queen of Sicily, Joan and her suite were presently housed in the tower of

Coudray. One wonders if the walls were as bare as now. It was old even then; it had been built five hundred years. But Queen Yolande would have seen to it that there were comforts, no doubt; some tapestries, perhaps, on the walls; a table, chairs, some covering for the stone floor. Perhaps it was even luxurious.

The king was still unready to see Joan. She was only a stone's throw away, but the whisperings of his advisers kept her there, while a commission of priests went to Domremy to inquire as to her character. When there were no further excuses for delay they contrived a trick—a deception. They persuaded the king to put another on the throne, one like him and in his royal dress, so that Joan might pay homage to this make-believe king, thus proving that she had no divine power or protection which would assist her in identifying the real one.

In the space where now is only green grass and sky and a broken wall Charles VII and his court gathered to receive the shepherd girl who had come to restore his kingdom. It was evening and the great hall was lighted, and at one end of it was the throne with its imitation king, and I suppose at the other the fireplace with a blazing fire. Down the center of the room were the courtiers, formed in two ranks, facing so that Joan might pass between them to the throne. The occasion was one of great ceremony—Joan and her suite were welcomed with fine honors. Banners waved, torches flared; trumpets blown at intervals marked the stages of her progress down the great hall; every show was made of paying her great

honor—everything that would distract her and blind her to their trick.

Charles VII, dressed as a simple courtier, stood a little distance from the throne. Joan, advancing to within a few steps of the pretended king, raised her eyes. Then for a moment she stood silent, puzzled. They expected her to kneel and make obeisance, but a moment later she turned and, hurrying to the rightful Charles, dropped on her knees and gave him heartfelt salutation. She had never seen him and was without knowledge of his features. Her protectors, or her gifts, had not failed. It was perhaps the greatest moment in French history.

We drove down into Chinon, past the house where it is said that Rabelais was born, and saw his statue, and one of Joan which was not very pleasing. Then we threaded some of the older streets and saw houses which I think cannot have changed much since Joan was there. It was getting well toward evening now, and we set out for Tours, by way of Azay.

The château of Azay-le-Rideau is all that Chinon is not. Perfect in condition, of rare beauty in design and ornamentation, fresh, almost new in appearance, Azay presents about the choicest flowering of the Renaissance. Joan of Arc had been dead a hundred years when Azay was built; France was no longer in dread of blighting invasion; a residence no longer needed to be a fortress. The royal châteaux of the Loire are the best remaining evidence of what Joan had done for the security of her kings. Whether they deserved it or not is another matter.

Possibly Azay-le-Rideau might not have looked so fresh under the glare of noonday, but in the mellow light of evening it could have been the home of one of our modern millionaires (a millionaire of perfect taste, I hasten to add), and located, let us say, in the vicinity of Newport. It was difficult to believe that it had been standing for four centuries.

Francis I did not build Azay-le-Rideau. But he liked it so much when he saw it (he was probably on a visit to its owner, the French treasurer, at the time) that he promptly confiscated it and added it to the collection of other châteaux he had built, or confiscated, or had in mind. Nothing very remarkable seems to have happened there—just the usual things—plots, and liaisons, and intrigues of a general sort, with now and then a chapter of real lovemaking, and certain marriages and deaths—the latter hurried a little sometimes to accommodate the impatient mourners.

But how beautiful it is! Its towers, its stately façades, its rich ornamentation reflected in the water of the wide stream that sweeps about its base, a natural moat, its background of rich foliage—these, in the gathering twilight, completed a picture such as Hawthorne could have conceived, or Edgar Poe.

I suppose it was too late to go inside, but we did not even apply. Like Langeais, it belongs to France now, and I believe is something of a museum, and rather modern. One could not risk carrying away anything less than a perfect memory of Azay.

Chapter XXV

TOURS

IN the quest for outlying châteaux one is likely to forget that Tours itself is very much worth while. Tours has been a city ever since France had a history, and it fought against Cæsar as far back as 52 B.C. It took its name from the Gallic tribe of that section, the Turoni, dwellers in those cliffs, I dare say, along the Loire.

Following the invasion of the Franks there came a line of counts who ruled Touraine until the eleventh century. What the human aspect of this delectable land was under their dominion is not very clear. The oldest castle we have seen, Coudray, was not begun until the end of that period. There are a thousand years behind it which seem filled mainly with shields and battle axes, roving knights and fair ladies, industrious dragons and the other properties of poetry. Yet there may have been more prosaic things. Seedtime and harvest probably did not fail.

Tours was beloved by French royalty. It was the capital of a province as rich as it was beautiful. Among French provinces Touraine was always the aristocrat. Its language has been kept pure. To this day the purest French in the world is spoken at Tours. The mechanic who made some repairs for me at the garage leaned on the mud guard, during a

brief intermission of that hottest of days, and told me about the purity of the French at Tours; and if there was anything wrong with his own locution my ear was not fine enough to detect it. To me it seemed as limpid as something distilled. Imagine such a thing happening in—say New Haven. Tours is still proud, still the aristocrat, still royal.

The Germans held Tours during the early months of 1871, but there is no trace of their occupation now. It was a bad dream which Tours does not care even to remember.[1]

Tours contains a fine cathedral, also the remains of what must have been a still finer one—two noble towers, so widely separated by streets and buildings that it is hard to imagine them ever having belonged to one structure. They are a part of the business of Tours, now. Shops are under them, lodgings in them. If they should tumble down they would create havoc. I was so sure they would crumble that we did not go into them; besides, it was very warm. The great church which connected these towers was dedicated to St. Martin, the same who divided his cloak with a beggar at Amiens and became Bishop of Tours in the fourth century. It was destroyed once and magnificently rebuilt, but it will never be rebuilt now. One of these old relics is called the Clock tower, the other the tower of Charlemagne, because Luitgard, his third queen, was buried beneath it.

The cathedral at the other end of town appears not to have suffered much from the ravages of time

[1] Tours during the World War became a great training camp, familiar to thousands of American soldiers.

and battle, though one of the towers was undergoing some kind of repairs that required intricate and lofty scaffolding. Most of the cathedrals are undergoing repairs, which is not surprising when one remembers the dates of their beginnings. This one at Tours was commenced in 1170 and the building continued during about four hundred years. Joan of Arc worshiped in it when she was on her way to Chinon and again when she had set out to relieve Orléans.

The face of the cathedral is indeed beautiful—"a jewel," said Henry IV, "of which only the casket is wanting." It does not seem to us as beautiful as Rouen, or Amiens, or Chartres, but its fluted truncated towers are peculiarly its own and hardly less impressive.

The cathedral itself forms a casket for the real jewel—the tomb of the two children of Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany, a little boy and girl, exquisitely cut, resting side by side on a slab of black marble, guarded at their head and feet by kneeling angels. Except the slab, the tomb is in white marble carved with symbolic decorations. It is all so delicate and conveys such a feeling of purity and tenderness that even after four hundred years one cannot fail to feel something of the love and sorrow that placed it there.

Tours is full of landmarks and localities, but the intense heat of the end of June is not a good time for city sight-seeing. We went about a little and glanced at this old street—such as Place Plumeran—and that old château, like the Tour de Guise, now a barrack, and passed the Théâtre Municipal, and the

house where Balzac was born, and stood impressed and blinking before the great Palace of Justice, blazing in the sun and made more brilliant, more dazzling by the intensely red-legged soldiers that in couples and groups are always loitering before it. I am convinced that to touch those red-hot trousers would take the skin off one's fingers.

We might have examined Tours more carefully if we had been driving instead of walking. I have spoken of the car being in the garage. We cracked the leaf of a spring that day at Chinon, and then our tires, old and worn after five thousand miles of loyal service, required reënforcement. They really required new ones, but our plan was to get home with these if we could. Besides, one cannot buy new tires in American sizes without sending a special order to the factory—a matter of delay. The little man at the hotel, who had more energy than anyone should display in such hot weather, pumped one of our back tires until the shoe burst at the rim. This was serious. I got a heavy canvas lining, and the garage-man patched and vulcanized and sold me a variety of appliances. But I could foresee trouble if the heat continued.

Chapter XXVI

CHENONCEAUX AND AMBOISE

(From my notebook)

THIS morning we got away from Tours, but it was after a strenuous time. It was one of those sweltering mornings, and to forward matters at the garage I helped put on all those repaired tires and appliances, and by the time we were through I was a rag. Narcissa photographed me, because she said she had never seen me look so interesting before. She made me stand in the sun, bareheaded and holding a tube in my hand, as if I had not enough to bear already.

Oh, but it was cool and delicious gliding along the smooth, shaded road toward Chenonceaux! One can almost afford to get as hot and sweltering and cross and gasping as I was for the sake of sitting back and looking across the wheel down a leafy avenue facing the breeze of your own making, a delicious nectar that bathes you through and cools and rests and soothes—an anodyne of peace.

By and by, being really cool in mind and body, we drew up abreast of a meadow which lay a little below the road, a place with a brook and overspreading shade, and with some men and women harvesting not far away. We thought they would not mind if we lunched there, and I think they must have been as kind-hearted as they were picturesque, for they did not offer to disturb us. It was a lovely spot, and

did not seem to belong to the present-day world at all. How could it, with the home of Diana of Poitiers just over there beyond the trees, with nesting places of Mary, Queen of Scots, all about, and with these haymakers, whose fashion in clothes has not much minded the centuries, to add the living human note of the past that makes imagination reality?

Chenonceaux, the real heart of the royal district, like Chinon, is not on the Loire itself, but on a small tributary, the Cher. I do not remember that I noticed the river when we entered the grounds, but it is a very important part of the château, which indeed is really a bridge over it—a supremely beautiful bridge, to be sure, but a bridge none the less, entirely crossing the pretty river by means of a series of high foundation arches. Upon these arches rises the rare edifice which Thomas Bohier, a receiver-general of taxes, began back in 1515 and Catherine de' Medici finished after she had turned out Diana of Poitiers and massacred the Huguenots, and needed a quiet place for retirement and religious thought. Bohier did not extend Chenonceaux entirely across the river. The river to him merely served as a moat. The son who followed him did not have time to make additions. Francis I came along, noticed that it was different from the other châteaux he had confiscated, and added it to his collection. Our present-day collectors cut a poor figure by the side of Francis I. Think of getting together assortments of bugs and postage stamps and ginger jars when one could go out and pick up châteaux!

It was Francis's son, Henry II, that gave it to Diana of Poitiers. Henry had his own kind of a collection and he used his papa's châteaux to keep it in. As he picked about the best one for Diana, we may believe that he regarded her as his choicest specimen. Unfortunately for Diana, Henry's queen, the terrible Catherine, outlived him; and when, after the funeral, Catherine drove around by Chenonceaux and suggested to Diana that perhaps she would like to exchange the place for a very excellent château farther up the road, Chaumont, we may assume that Diana moved with no unseemly delay. Diana tactfully said she liked Chaumont ever so much, for a change, that perhaps living on a hilltop was healthier than over the water, anyway. Still, it must have made her sigh, I think, to know that her successor was carrying out the plan which Diana herself had conceived of extending Chenonceaux across the Cher.

We stopped a little to look at the beautiful façade of Chenonceaux, then crossed the drawbridge, or what is now the substitute for it, and were welcomed at the door by just the proper person—a fine, dignified woman of gentle voice and perfect knowledge. She showed us through the beautiful home, for it is still a home, the property to-day of M. Meunier of chocolate fame and fortune. I cannot say how glad I am that M. Meunier owns Chenonceaux. He has done nothing to the place to spoil it, and it is not a museum. The lower rooms which we saw have many of the original furnishings. The ornaments, the tapestries, the pictures are the same. I think

Diana must have regretted leaving her fine private room, with its chimney piece, supported by caryatids, and its rare Flemish tapestry. We regretted leaving, too. We do not care for interiors that have been overhauled and refurbished and made into museums, but we were in no hurry to leave Chenonceaux. There is hardly any place, I think, where one may come so nearly stepping back through the centuries.

We went out into the long wing that is built on the arches above the river, and looked down at the water flowing below. Our conductor told us that the supporting arches had been built on the foundations of an ancient mill. The beautiful gallery which the bridge supports must have known much gayety; much dancing and promenading up and down; much lovemaking and some heartache.

Jean Jacques Rousseau seems to have been everywhere. We could not run amiss of him in eastern France and in Switzerland; now here again he turns up at Chenonceaux. Chenonceaux in the eighteenth century fell to M. Claude Dupin, farmer-general, who surrounded himself with the foremost artists and social leaders of his time. He engaged Rousseau to superintend the education of his son.

"We amused ourselves greatly at this fine place," writes Rousseau; "the living was of the best, and I became as fat as a monk. We made a great deal of music and acted comedies."

The period of M. Dupin's ownership, one of the most brilliant, and certainly the most moral in the earlier history of Chenonceaux, has left many mem-

ories. Of the brief, insipid honeymoon of the puny Francis II and Mary Stuart no breath remains.

Amboise is on the Loire, and there is a good inn on the quay. It was evening when we got there, and we did nothing after dinner but sit on the high masonry embankment that buttresses the river, and watch the men who fished, while the light faded from the water; though we occasionally turned to look at the imposing profile of the great château on the high cliff above the Loire.

We drove up there next morning—that is, we drove as high as one may drive, and climbed stairs the remaining distance. Amboise is a splendid structure from without, but, unlike Chenonceaux, it is interesting within only for what it has been. It is occupied by the superannuated servants of the present owner, one of the Orléans family, which is fine for them, and proper enough, but bad for the atmosphere. There are a bareness and a whitewashed feeling about the place that are death to romance. Even the circular inclined plane by which one may ride or drive to the top of the great tower suggested some sort of temporary structure at an amusement park rather than a convenience for kings. I was more interested in a low doorway against the lintel of which Charles VIII knocked his head and died. But I wish I could have picked Charles VII for that accident, to punish him for having abandoned Joan of Arc.

Though about a hundred years older, Amboise, like Chenonceaux, belongs mainly to the period of Francis I, and was inhabited by the same society. The

Francises and the Henrys enjoyed its hospitality, and Catherine de' Medici, and Mary, Queen of Scots. Also some twelve or fifteen hundred Huguenots who were invited there, and, at Catherine's suggestion, butchered on the terrace just in front of the castle windows. There is a balcony overlooking the terrace, and it is said that Catherine and Mary, also Mary's husband and his two brothers, sat on the balcony better to observe the spectacle. Tradition does not say whether they had ices served or not. Some of the Huguenots did not wait, and the soldiers had to drown what they could catch of them in the Loire, likewise in view from the royal balcony. When the show was over there was suspended from the balcony a fringe of Huguenot heads. Those were frivolous times.

There is a flower garden to-day on the terrace where the Huguenots were murdered, and one may imagine, if he chooses, the scarlet posies to be brighter for that history. But then there are few enough places in France where blossoms have not been richened by the human stain. Consider those vivid seas of poppies! Mary Stuart, by the way, seems entitled to all the pity that the centuries have accorded her. There were few influences in her early life that were not vile.

On the ramparts at Amboise we were shown a chapel, with the grave of Leonardo Da Vinci, who was summoned to Amboise by Francis I, and died there in 1519. There is a question about da Vinci's ashes resting here, I believe, but it does not matter—it is his grave.

If I were going back to Amboise I would view it only from the outside. With its immense tower and its beautiful Gothic and Renaissance façade surmounting the heights above the Loire, nothing—nothing in the world could be more beautiful.

Chapter XXVII

CHAMBORD AND CLÉRY

FRANCIS I had a fine taste for collecting châteaux picturesquely located, but when he built one for himself he located it in the most unbeautiful situation in France. It requires patience and talent to find monotony of prospect in France, but our hero succeeded, and discovered a dead flat tract of thirteen thousand acres with an approach through as dreary a level of unprosperous-looking farm district as may be found on the continent of Europe.

It is not on the Loire, but on a little stream called the Cosson, and when we had left the Loire and found the country getting flatter and poorer and less promising with every mile, we could not believe that we were on the right road. But when we inquired, our informants still pointed ahead, and by and by, in the midst of nowhere and surrounded by nothing, we came to a great inclosure of undersized trees, with an entrance. Driving in, we looked down a long avenue to an expanse of architecture that seemed to be growing from a dead level of sandy park, and to have attained about two thirds its proper height.

An old man was raking around the entrance and we asked him if one was allowed to lunch in the park. He said, "Oh yes, anywhere," and gave a general wave that comprehended the whole tract. So we

turned into a side road and found a place that was shady enough, but not cool, for there seemed to be no large overspreading trees in this park, but only small, close, bushy ones. It is said that Francis built Chambord for two reasons, one of them being the memory of an old sweetheart who used to live in the neighborhood, the other on account of the abundant game to be found there. I am inclined to the latter idea. There is nothing in the location to suggest romance; there is everything to suggest game. The twenty square miles of thicket that go with Chambord could hardly be surpassed as a harbor for beast and bird.

If Chambord was built, so to speak, as a sort of hunting lodge, it is the largest one on record. Francis kept eighteen hundred men busy at it for twelve years, and then did not get it done. He lived in it, more or less, for some seven years, however; then went to Rambouillet to die, and left his son, Henry II, to carry on the work. Henry did not care for Chambord—the marshy place gave him fever, but he kept the building going until he was killed in a tourney, when the construction stopped. His widow, the bloody Catherine de' Medici, retired to Chambord in her old age, and set the place in order. She was terribly superstitious and surrounded herself with astrologers and soothsayers. At night she used to go up to the great lantern tower to read her fortune in the stars. It is my opinion that she did not go up there alone, not with that record of hers.

Mansard, who laid a blight on architecture that lasted for two hundred years, once got hold of Cham-

bord and spoiled what he could, and had planned to do worse things, but something—death, perhaps—interfered. That was when Louis XIV brought Queen Maria Theresa to Chambord, and held high and splendid court there, surrounding himself with brilliant men and women, among them Molière and the widow of the poet Scarron, Françoise d'Aubigné, the same that later became queen, under the title of Madame de Maintenon. That was the heyday of Chambord's history. A large guardroom was gilded and converted into a theater. Molière gave first presentations there and received public compliment from the king. Diversion was the order of the day and night.

"The court is very gay—the king hunts much," wrote Maintenon; "one eats always with him; there is one day a ball, and the next a comedy."

Nothing very startling has happened at Chambord since Louis' time. Its tenants have been numerous enough, and royal, or distinguished, but they could not maintain the pace set by Louis XIV. Stanislas Leckzinski, the exiled Polish king, occupied it during the early years of the eighteenth century, and succeeded in marrying his daughter to the dissolute Louis XV. Seventy years later the revolution came along. An order was issued to sell the contents of Chambord, and a greedy rabble came and stripped it clean. There was a further decree to efface all signs of royalty, but when it was discovered that every bit of carving within and without the vast place expressed royalty in some manner, and that it would cost twenty thousand dollars to cut it away,

this project was happily abandoned. Chambord was left empty but intact. Whatever has been done since has been in the way of restoration.

There is not a particle of shade around Chambord. It stands as bare and exposed to the blazing sky to-day as it did when those eighteen hundred workmen laid down their tools four hundred years ago. There is hardly a shrub. Even the grass looks discouraged. A location, indeed, for a royal palace!

We left the car under the shade of a wall and crossed a dazzling open space to the entrance of a court where we bought entrance tickets. Then we crossed the blinding court and were in a cool place at last, the wide castle entrance. We were surprised a little, though, to find a ticket box and a registering turnstile. Things are on a business basis at Chambord. I suppose the money collected is used for repairs.

The best advertised feature of Chambord is the one you see first, the great spiral double stairway arranged one flight above the other, so that persons may be ascending without meeting others who are descending at the same moment. Many persons would not visit Chambord but for this special show feature. Our conductor made us ascend and descend to prove that this unrivaled attraction would really work as advertised. It is designed on the principle of the double stripes on a barber pole.

But there are other worth-while features at Chambord. We wandered through the great cool rooms, not furnished, yet not empty, containing as they do some rare pictures, old statuary and historic furniture, despoiled by the revolutionists, now restored

to their original setting. Chambord is not a museum. It belongs to a Duke of Parma, a direct descendant from Louis XIV. Under Louis XVIII the estate was sold, but in 1821 three hundred thousand dollars was raised by public subscription to purchase the place for the remaining heir of the Bourbon dynasty, the Duke of Bordeaux, who accepted with the gift the title of the Count of Chambord. But he was in exile and did not come to see his property for fifty years; even then only to write a letter renouncing his claim to the throne and to say once more good-by to France. He willed the property to the children of his sister, the Duchess of Parma, and it is to the next generation that it belongs to-day. Our conductor told us that the present Duke of Parma comes now and then for the shooting, which is still of the best.

We ascended to the roof, which is Chambord's chief ornament. It is an architectural garden. Such elaboration of turrets with carved leafwork and symbolism, such richness of incrustation and detail, did, in fact, suggest some fantastic and fabulous culture. If it had not been all fairly leaping with heat I should have wished to stay longer.

But I would not care to go to Chambord again. As we drove down the long drive, and turned a little for a last look at that enormous frontage, those immense low towers, that superb roof structure—all that magnificence dropped down there in a dreary level—I thought, "If ever a house was a white elephant that one is, and if one had to rename it it might well be called Francis's Folly."

I suppose it was two hours later when we had been drifting drowsily up the valley of the Loire that we stopped in a village for water. There was an old church across the way, and as usual we stepped inside, as much for the cool refreshment as for anything, expecting nothing else worth while.

How easily we might have missed the wealth we found there. We did not know the name of the village. We did not recognize Cléry, even when we heard it, and the guidebook gives it just four lines. But we had been inside only a moment when we realized that the Church of Our Lady of Cléry is an ancient and sacred shrine. A great tablet told us that since 1325 kings of France, sinners and saints have made pilgrimages there; Charles IV, Philippe VI, Charles VII, St. François Xavier, and so down the centuries to Marshal MacMahon of our own time. But to us greater than all the rest are the names of Dunois and Joan of Arc. Joan had passed this way with her army, of course; for the moment we had forgotten that we were following her footsteps to Orléans.

The place was rich in relics. Among these the tomb of Louis XI and a column which inclosed the heart of Charles VIII. There could hardly have been a shrine in France more venerated in the past than this forgotten church by the roadside, in this forgotten village where, I suppose, tourists to-day never stop at all. It was hard to believe in the reality of our discovery, even when we stood there. But there were the tablets and inscriptions—they could not be denied.

We wandered about, finding something new and precious at every turn, until the afternoon light faded. Then we crossed a long bridge over the Loire to the larger village of Meung, where there was the Hôtel St. Jacques, one of the kind we like best and one of the best of the kind.

Chapter XXVIII

ORLÉANS

THERE is some sight-seeing to be done in Meung, but we were too anxious to get to Orléans to stop for it. Yet we did not hurry through our last summer morning along the Loire. I do not know what could be more lovely than our leisurely hour—the distance was fifteen miles—under cool, outspreading branches, with glimpses of the bright river and vistas of happy fields.

We did not even try to imagine, as we approached the outskirts, that the Orléans of Joan's time presented anything of its appearance to-day. Orléans is a modern, or modernized, city, and, except the river, there could hardly be anything in the present prospect that Joan saw. That it is the scene of her first military conquest and added its name to the title by which she belongs to history is, however, enough to make it one of the holy places of France.

It has been always a military city, a place of battles. Cæsar burned it, Attila attacked it, Clovis captured it—there was nearly always war of one sort or another going on there. The English and Burgundians would have had it in 1429 but for the arrival of Joan's army. Since then war has visited Orléans less frequently. Its latest experience was with the Germans who invested it in 1870–71.

Joan was misled by her generals, whose faith in her was not complete. Orléans lies on the north bank of the Loire; they brought her down on the south bank, fearing the prowess of the enemy's forces. Discovering the deception, the Maid promptly sent the main body of her troops back some thirty-five miles to a safe crossing, and, taking a thousand men, passed over the Loire and entered the city by a gate still held by the French. That the city was not completely surrounded made it possible to attack the enemy simultaneously from within and without, while her presence among the Orléanese would inspire them with new hope and valor. Mark Twain in his *Recollections* pictures the great moment of her entry.

> It was eight in the evening when she and her troops rode in at the Burgundy gate. . . . She was riding a white horse, and she carried in her hand the sacred sword of Fierbois. You should have seen Orléans then. What a picture it was! Such black seas of people, such a starry firmament of torches, such roaring whirlwinds of welcome, such booming of bells and thundering of cannon! It was as if the world was come to an end. Everywhere in the glare of the torches one saw rank upon rank of upturned white faces, the mouths wide open, shouting, and the unchecked tears running down; Joan forged her slow way through the solid masses, her mailed form projecting above the pavement of heads like a silver statue. The people about her struggled along, gazing up at her through their tears with the rapt look of men and women who believe they are seeing one who is divine; and always her feet were being kissed by grateful folk, and such as failed of that privilege touched her horse and then kissed their fingers.

This was the 29th of April. Nine days later, May 8, 1429, after some fierce fighting during which

Joan was severely wounded, the besiegers were scattered, Orléans was free. Mark Twain writes:

> No other girl in all history has ever reached such a summit of glory as Joan of Arc reached that day. . . . Orléans will never forget the 8th of May, nor ever fail to celebrate it. It is Joan of Arc's day—and holy.

Two days, May 7th and 8th, are given each year to the celebration, and Orléans in other ways has honored the memory of her deliverer. A wide street bears her name, and there are noble statues, and a museum, and holy church offerings. The Boucher home which sheltered Joan during her sojourn in Orléans has been preserved; at least a house is still shown as the Boucher house, though how much of the original structure remains no one at this day seems willing to decide.

We drove there first, for it is the only spot in Orléans that can claim even a possibility of having known Joan's actual impress. It is a house of the old cross-timber and brick architecture, and if these are not the veritable walls that Joan saw they must at least bear a close resemblance to those of the house of Jacques Boucher, treasurer of the Duke of Orléans, where Joan was made welcome. The interior is less convincing. It is ecclesiastical, and there is an air of general newness and reconstruction about it that suggests nothing of that long-ago occupancy. It was rather painful to linger, and we were inclined now to hesitate at the thought of visiting the ancient home of Agnes Sorel, where the Joan of Arc Museum is located.

It would have been a mistake not to do so, however. It is only a few doors away on the same street, rue du Tabour, and it is a fine old mansion, genuinely old, and fairly overflowing with objects of every conceivable sort relating to Joan of Arc. Books, statuary, paintings, armor, banners, offerings, coins, medals, ornaments, engravings, letters—thousands upon thousands of articles gathered there in the Maid's memory. I think there is not one of them that her hand ever touched, or that she ever saw, but in their entirety they convey, as nothing else could, the reverence that Joan's memory has inspired during the centuries that have gone since her presence made this sacred ground. Until the revolution Orléans preserved Joan's banner, some of her clothing, and other genuine relics; but then the mob burned them, probably because Joan delivered France to royalty. One finds it rather easy to forgive the revolutionary mob almost anything—certainly anything more easily than such insane vandalism. We were shown an ancient copy of the banner, still borne, I believe, in the annual festivals. Baedeker speaks of arms and armor worn at the siege of Orléans, but the guardian of the place was not willing to guarantee their genuineness. I wish he had not thought it necessary to be so honest. He did show us a photograph of Joan's signature, the original of which belongs to one of her collateral descendants. She wrote it "Jehanne," and her pen must have been guided by her secretary, Louis de Conte, for Joan could neither read nor write.

We drove to the Place Martroi to see the large equestrienne statue of Joan by Foyatier, with reliefs

by Vital Dubray. It is very imposing, and the reliefs showing the great moments in Joan's career are really fine. We did not care to hunt for other memorials. It was enough to drive about the city trying to pick out a house here and there that looked as if it might have been standing five hundred years, but if there were any of that age—any that had looked upon the wild joy of Joan's entrance and upon her triumphal departure, they were very few indeed.

Chapter XXIX

FONTAINEBLEAU

WE turned north now, toward Fontainebleau, which we had touched a month earlier on the way to Paris. It is a grand straight road from Orléans to Fontainebleau, and it passes through Pithiviers, which did not look especially interesting, though we discovered when it was too late that it is noted for its almond cakes and lark pies. I wanted to go back then, but the majority was against it.

Late in the afternoon we entered for the second time the majestic forest of Fontainebleau and by and by came to the palace and the little town, and to a pretty hotel on a side street that was really a village inn for comfort and welcome. There was still plenty of daylight, mellow, waning daylight, and the palace was not far away. We would not wait for it until morning.

I think we most enjoy seeing palaces about the closing hours. There are seldom any other visitors then, and the waning afternoon sunlight in the vacant rooms mellows their garish emptiness, and seems somehow to bring nearer the rich pageant of life and love and death that flowed by there so long and then one day came to an end, and now it is not passing any more.

It was really closing time when we arrived at the palace, but the custodian was lenient and for an hour we wandered through gorgeous galleries, and salons, and suites of private apartments where queens and kings lived gladly, loved madly, died sadly, for about four hundred years. Francis I built Fontainebleau, on the site of a mediæval castle. He was a hunter, and the forests of Fontainebleau, like those of Chambord, were always famous hunting grounds. Louis XIII, who was born in Fontainebleau, built the grand entrance staircase, from which two hundred years later Napoleon Bonaparte would bid good-by to his generals before starting for Elba. Other kings have added to the place and embellished it; the last being Napoleon III, who built for Eugénie the Bijou theater across the court.

It may have been our mood, it may have been the tranquil evening light, it may have been reality that Fontainebleau was more friendly, more alive, more a place for living men and women to inhabit than any other palace we have seen. It was hard to imagine Versailles as having ever been a home for anybody. At Fontainebleau I felt that we were intruding—that Madame de Maintenon, Marie Antoinette, Marie Louise, or Eugénie might enter at any moment and find us there. Perhaps it was in the apartments of Marie Antoinette that one felt this most. There is a sort of personality in the gorgeousness of her bedchamber that has to do, likely enough, with the memory of her tragic end, but certainly it is there. The gilded ceiling sings of her; the satin hangings—a marriage gift from

the city of Lyons—breathe of her; even the iron window-fastenings are not without personal utterance, for they were wrought by the skillful hands of the king himself, out of his love for her.

The apartments of the first Napoleon and Marie Louise tell something, too, but the story seems less intimate. Yet the table is there on which Napoleon signed his abdication while an escort waited to take him to Elba.

For size and magnificence the library is the most impressive room in Fontainebleau. It is lofty and splendid, and it is two hundred and sixty-four feet long. It is called the gallery of Diana, after Diana of Poitiers, who for a lady of tenuous moral fiber seems to have inspired some pretty substantial memories. The ballroom, the finest in Europe, also belongs to Diana, by special dedication of Henry II, who decorated it magnificently to suit Diana's charms. Napoleon III gave great hunting banquets there. Since then it has been always empty, except for visitors.

The custodian took us through a suite of rooms called the "Apartments of the White Queens," because once they were restored for the widows of French kings, who usually dressed in white. Napoleon used the rooms for another purpose. He invited Pope Pius VII to Fontainebleau to sanction his divorce from Josephine, and when the pope declined, Napoleon prolonged the pope's visit for eighteen months, secluding him in this luxurious place, to give him a chance to modify his views. They visited together a good deal, and their interviews were not always

calm. Napoleon also wanted the pope to sign away the states of the Church, and once when they were discussing the matter rather earnestly the emperor boxed the pope's ears. He had a convincing way in those days. I wonder if later, standing on the St. Helena headland, he ever recalled that incident. If he did, I dare say it made him smile.

The light was getting dim by the time we reached the pretty theater which Louis Napoleon built for Eugénie. It is a very choice place, and we were allowed to go on the stage and behind the scenes and up in the galleries, and there was something in the dusky vacancy of that little playhouse, built to amuse the last empress of France, that affected us almost more than any of the rest of the palace, though it was built not so long ago and its owner is still alive.[1] It is not used, the custodian told us—has never been used since Eugénie went away.

From a terrace back of the palace we looked out on a pretty lake where Eugénie's son used to sail a miniature full-rigged ship—large enough, if one could judge from a picture we saw, to have held the little prince himself. There was still sunlight on the treetops, and these and the prince's little pavilion reflecting in the tranquil water made the place beautiful. But the little vessel was not there. I wished, as we watched, that it might come sailing by. I wished that the prince had never been exiled and that he had not grown up and gone to his death in a South African jungle. I wished that he might be back to sail his ship again, and that Eugénie

[1] She lived six years longer, dying in 1920.

might have her theater once more, and that Louis Napoleon's hunting parties might still assemble in Diana's painted ballroom and fill the vacant palace with something besides mere curiosity and vain imaginings.

Chapter XXX

RHEIMS

WE had meant to go to Barbizon, but we got lost in the forest next morning, and when we found ourselves we were a good way in the direction of Melun, so concluded to keep on, consoling ourselves with the thought that Barbizon is not Barbizon any more, and would probably be a disappointment, anyway. We kept on from Melun, also, after buying some luncheon things, and all day traversed that beautiful rolling district which lies east of Paris and below Rheims, arriving toward evening at Épernay, the Sparnacum of antiquity and the champagne center of to-day. Épernay was ancient once, but it is all new now, with wide streets and every indication of business progress. We had no need to linger there. We were anxious to get to Rheims.

There had been heavy rains in the champagne district, and next morning the gray sky and close air gave promise of more. The roads were not the best, being rather slippery and uneven from the heavy traffic of the wine carts. But the vine-covered hills between Épernay and Rheims, with their dark-green matted leafage, seemed to us as richly productive as anything in France.

We were still in the hills when we looked down on the valley of the Vesle and saw a city outspread

there, and in its center the architectural and ecclesiastical pride of the world, the cathedral of Rheims. Large as the city was, that great central ornament dwarfed and dominated its surroundings. Thus Joan of Arc had seen it when at the head of her victorious army she conducted the king to Rheims for his coronation. She was nearing the fulfillment of her assignment, the completion of the great labor laid upon her by the voices of her saints. Mark Twain tells of Joan's approach to Rheims, of the tide of cheers that swept her ranks at the vision of the distant towers:

> And as for Joan of Arc, there where she sat her horse, gazing, clothed all in white armor, dreamy, beautiful, and in her face a deep, deep joy, a joy not of earth; oh, she was not flesh, she was spiritual! Her sublime mission was closing—closing in flawless triumph. To-morrow she could say, "It is finished—let me go free."

It was the 16th of July that Joan looked down upon Rheims, and now, four hundred and eighty-five years later, it was again July, with the same summer glory on the woods, the same green and scarlet in the poppied fields, the same fair valley, the same stately towers rising to the sky. But no one can ever feel what Joan felt, can ever put into words, ever so faintly, what that moment and that vision meant to the Domremy shepherd girl.

Descending the plain, we entered the city, crossed a bridge, and made our way to the cathedral square. Then presently we were at the doorway where Joan and her king had entered—the portal which has been called the most beautiful this side of Paradise.

How little we dreamed that we were among the last to look upon it in its glory—that disfigurement and destruction lay only a few weeks ahead!

It is not required any more that one should write descriptively of the church of Rheims. It has been done so thoroughly, and so often, by those so highly qualified for the undertaking, that such supplementary remarks as I might offer would hardly rise even to the dignity of an impertinence. Fergussen, who must have been an authority, for the guidebook quotes him, called it, "perhaps the most beautiful structure produced in the Middle Ages."

> Nothing [he says] can exceed the majesty of its deeply recessed portals, the beauty of the rose window that surmounts them, or the elegance of the gallery that completes the façade and serves as a basement to the light and graceful towers that crown the composition.

The cathedral was already two hundred years old when Joan arrived in 1429. But it must have looked quite fresh and new then, for, nearly five centuries later, it seemed to have suffered little. Some of the five hundred and thirty statues of its entrance were weatherworn and scarred, but the general effect was not disturbed.

Many kings had preceded Joan and her sovereign through the sacred entrance. Long before the cathedral was built French sovereigns had come to Rheims for their coronation, to be anointed with some drops of the inexhaustible oil which a white dove had miraculously brought from heaven for the baptism of Clovis. That had been nearly a thousand

years before, but in Joan's day the sacred vessel and its holy contents were still preserved in the ancient abbey of St. Remi, and would be used for the anointing of her king. The Archbishop of Rheims and his canons, with a deputy of nobles, had been sent for the awesome relic, after the nobles had sworn upon their lives to restore it to St. Remi when the coronation was over. The abbot himself, attended by this splendid escort, brought the precious vessel, and the crowd fell prostrate and prayed while this holiest of objects, for it had been made in heaven, passed by. We are told that the abbot, attended by the archbishop and those others, entered the crowded church, followed by the five mounted knights, who rode down the great central aisle, clear to the choir, and then at a signal backed their prancing steeds all the distance to the great doors.

It was a mighty assemblage that had gathered for the crowning of Joan's king. France, overrun by an invader, had known no real king for years—had, indeed, well-nigh surrendered her nationality. Now the saints themselves had taken up their cause, and in the person of a young girl from an obscure village had given victory to their arms and brought redemption to their throne. No wonder the vast church was packed and that crowds were massed outside. From all directions had come pilgrims to the great event—persons of every rank, among them two shepherds, Joan's aged father and uncle, who had walked from Domremy, one hundred and twenty miles, to verify with their own eyes what their ears could not credit.

Very likely the cathedral at Rheims has never known such a throng since that day, nor heard such a mighty shout as went up when Joan and the king, side by side, and followed by a splendid train, appeared at the great side entrance and moved slowly to the altar.

I think there must have fallen a deep hush then —a petrified stillness that lasted through the long ceremonial, while every eye feasted itself upon the young girl standing there at the king's side, holding her victorious standard above him—the banner that "had borne the burden and had earned the victory," as she would one day testify at her trial. I am sure that vast throng would keep silence, scarcely breathing, until the final word was spoken and the dauphin had accepted the crown and placed it upon his head. But then we may hear borne faintly down the centuries the roar of renewed shouting that told to those waiting without that the great ceremony was ended, that Charles VII of France had been anointed king. In the *Recollections* Mark Twain makes the Sieur de Conte say:

> What a crash there was! All about us cries and cheers, and the chanting of the choir and the groaning of the organ; and outside the clamoring of the bells and the booming of the cannon.
>
> The fantastic dream, the incredible dream, the impossible dream of the peasant child stood fulfilled.

It had become reality—perhaps in that old day it even *seemed* reality—but now, after five hundred years, it has become once more a dream—to-day *our* dream—and in the filmy picture we see the

shepherd girl on her knees, saying to the crowned king:

"My work which was given me to do is finished; give me your peace and let me go back to my mother, who is poor and old and has need of me.'

But the king raises her up and praises her and confers upon her nobility and titles, and asks her to name a reward for her service, and in the old dream we hear her ask favor for her village—that Domremy, "poor and hard pressed by reason of the war," may have its taxes remitted.

Nothing for herself—no more than that, and in the presence of all the great assemblage Charles VII pronounces the decree that, by grace of Joan of Arc, Domremy shall be free from taxes forever.

Here within these walls it was all reality five hundred years ago. We do not study this interior to discover special art values or to distinguish in what manner it differs from others we have seen. For us the light from its great rose window and upper arches is glorified because once it fell upon Joan of Arc in that supreme moment when she saw her labor finished and asked only that she might return to Domremy and her flocks. The statuary in the niches are holy because they looked upon that scene, the altar paving is sanctified because it felt the pressure of her feet.

We wandered about the great place, but we came back again and again to the altar, and, looking through the railing, dreamed once more of that great moment when a frail shepherd girl began anew the history of France.

Back of the altar was a statue of Joan unlike any we have seen elsewhere, and to us more beautiful. It was not Joan with her banner aloft, her eyes upward. It was Joan with her eyes lowered, looking at no outward thing, her face passive—the saddest face and the saddest eyes in the world. It was Joan the sacrifice—of her people and her king.

Chapter XXXI

ALONG THE MARNE

IT may have been two miles out of Rheims that we met the flood. There had been a heavy shower as we entered the city, but presently the sun broke out, bright and hot, too bright and too hot for permanence. Now suddenly all was black again, there was a roar of thunder, and then such an opening of the water gates of the sky as would have disturbed Noah. There was no thought of driving through such a torrent. I pulled over to the side of the road, but the tall high-trimmed trees afforded no protection. Our top was a shelter, but not a complete one —the wind drove the water in, and in a moment our umbrellas were sticking out in every direction, and we had huddled together like chickens. The water seemed to fall solidly. The world was blotted out. I had the feeling at moments that we were being swept down some great submarine current.

I don't know how long the inundation lasted. It may have been five minutes—it may have been thirty. Then suddenly it stopped—it was over—the sun was out!

There was then no mud in France—not in the high-roads—and a moment or two later we had revived, our engine was going, and we were gliding between fair fields—fresh shining fields where scarlet poppy

patches were as pools of blood. There is no lovelier land than the Marne district, from Rheims to Chalons and to Vitry-le-François. It had often been a war district—a battle ground, fought over time and again since the ancient allies defeated Attila and his Huns there, checking the purpose of the "Scourge of God," as he styled himself, to found a new dynasty upon the wreck of Rome. It could never be a battle ground again, we thought—the great nations were too advanced for war. Ah me! Within two months from that day men were lying dead across that very road, shells were tearing at the lovely fields, and another stain had mingled with the trampled poppies.

Chalons-sur-Marne, like Rheims and Épernay, is a champagne center and prosperous. There were some churches there, but they did not seem of great importance. We stopped for water at Vitry-le-François, a hot, uninteresting-looking place, though it had played a part in much history, and would presently play a part in much more. It was always an outpost against vandal incursions from the north, and Francis I rebuilt and strengthened it.

At Vitry we left the Marne and kept the wide road eastward, for we were bound now for the Vosges, for Domremy on the Meuse, Joan's starting place. The sun burned again, the road got hot, and suddenly during the afternoon one of our tires went off like a gun.

One of our old shoes had blown out at the rim, and there was a doubtful look about the others. Narcissa and I labored in the hot sun—for there was no shade from those slim roadside poplars—

and with inside patches and outside patches managed to get in traveling order again, though personally we were pretty limp by the time we were ready to move, and a good deal disheartened. The prospect of reaching Vevey, our base of supplies, without laying up somewhere to order new tires was not bright, and it became even less so that evening, when in front of the hotel at St. Dizier another tire pushed out at the rim, and in the gathering dusk, surrounded by an audience, I had to make further repairs before I could get into the garage.

Early next morning I gave those tires all a pretty general overhauling. I put in blow-out patches wherever there seemed to be a weak place and doubled them at the broken spots. By the time I got done we were carrying in our tires all the extra rubber and leather and general aid-to-the-injured stuff that had formerly been under the back seat, and I was obliged to make a trip around to the supply garages for more. Fortunately the weather had changed overnight, and it was cool. Old tires and even new ones hold better on cool roads.

It turned still cooler as we proceeded—it became chilly—for the Fourth of July it was winterish. At Chalons we had expended three whole francs for a bottle of champagne for celebration purposes, and when we made our luncheon camp in a sheltered cover of a pretty meadow where there was a clear, racing brook, we were too cold to sit down, and drank standing a toast to our national independence, and would have liked more of that delicious liquid warmth, regardless of cost. There could hardly have been

a more beautiful spot than that, but I do not remember any place where we were less inclined to linger.

Yet how quickly weather can change. Within an hour it was warm again—not hot, but mildly pleasant, even delightful.

Chapter XXXII

DOMREMY

WE were well down in the Vosges now and beginning to inquire for Domremy. How strange it seemed to be actually making inquiries for a place that always before had been just a part of an old legend—a half-mythical story of a little girl who, tending her sheep, had heard the voices of angels. One had the feeling that there could never really be such a place at all, that, even had it once existed, it must have vanished long ago; that to ask the way to it now would be like those who in some old fairy tale come back after ages of enchantment and inquire for places and people long forgotten. Domremy! No, it was not possible. We should meet puzzled, blank looks, pitying smiles, in answer to our queries. We should never find one able to point a way and say, "That is the road to Domremy." One could as easily say "the road to Camelot."

Yet there came a time when we must ask. We had been passing through miles of wonderful forest, with regularly cut roads leading away at intervals, suggesting a vast preserved estate, when we came out to an open hill land, evidently a grazing country, with dividing roads and no definite markings. So we stopped a humble-looking old man and hesitatingly, rather falteringly, asked him the road to

Domremy. He regarded us a moment, then said very gently, pointing, "It is down there just a little way."

So we were near—quite near—perhaps even now passing a spot where Joan had tended her sheep. Our informant turned to watch us pass. He knew why we were going to Domremy. He could have been a descendant of those who had played with Joan.

Even now it was hard to believe that Domremy would be just an old village, such a village as Joan had known, where humble folk led humble lives tending their flocks and small acres. Very likely it had become a tourist resort—a mere locality, with a hotel. It was only when we were actually in the streets of a decaying, time-beaten little hamlet and were told that this was indeed Domremy, the home of Joan of Arc, that we awoke to the actuality of the place and to the realization that in character at least it had not greatly changed.

We drove to the church—an ancient, weatherworn little edifice. The invaders destroyed it the same year that Joan set out on her march, but when Joan had given safety to France the fragments were gathered and rebuilt, so if it is not in its entirety the identical chapel where Joan worshiped, it contains, at least, portions of the original structure and stands upon the same ground. In front of the church is a bronze statue of the Maid, and above the entrance a painting of Joan listening to the voices. But these are modern. Inside are more precious things.

It is a plain, humble interior, rather too fresh and

new looking for its antiquity, perhaps because of the whitened walls. But near the altar there is an object that does not disappoint. It is an ancient baptismal font—the original font of the little ruined chapel—the vessel in which Joan of Arc was baptized. I think there can be no question of its authenticity. It would be a holy object to the people of Domremy; to them Joan was already a saint at the time of her death, and any object that had served her was sacred. The relic dug from the ruined chapel would be faithfully guarded, and there would be many still alive to identify it when the church's restoration was complete and the ancient vessel set in place.

It seems a marvelous thing to be able to look upon an object that may be regarded as the ceremonial starting point of a grace that was to redeem a nation. Surely, if ever angels stood by to observe the rites of men they gathered with those humble shepherd folk about the little basin where a tiny soul was being consecrated to their special service.

In the church also is the headstone from the grave of Joan's godmother, with an ancient inscription which one may study out, and travel back a long way. Near it is another object—one that ranks in honor with the baptismal font—the statuette of St. Marguerite, before which Joan prayed. Like the font this would be a holy thing, even in Joan's lifetime, and would be preserved and handed down. To me it seems almost too precious to remain in that ancient, perishing church. It is something that Joan of Arc not only saw and touched, but to which she gave spiritual adoration. To me it seems the most precious,

the most sacred relic in France. The old church appears so poor a protection for it. Yet I should be sorry to see it taken elsewhere.

Joan's house is only a step away—a remnant of a house, for, though it was not demolished like the church, it has suffered from alterations, and portions of it were destroyed. Whatever remained at the time of Louis XI would seem to have been preserved about as it was then, though of course restored; the royal arms of France, with those accorded by Charles VII to Joan and her family, were combined ornamentally above the door with the date, 1481, and the inscription, in old French, "*Vive labeur; vive le roy Loys.*" The son of Joan's king must have felt that it was proper to preserve the birthplace of the girl who had saved his throne.

Doubtless the main walls of the old house of Jacques d'Arc are the same that Joan knew. Joan's mother lived there until 1438, and it was less than fifty years later that Louis XI gave orders for the restoration. The old walls were solidly built. It is not likely that they could have fallen to complete ruin in that time. The rest is mainly new.

What the inside of the old house was in Joan's time we can only imagine. The entrance room was the general room, I suppose, and it was here, we are told, that Joan was born. Mark Twain has imagined a scene in the house of Jacques d'Arc where a hungry straggler comes one night and knocks at the door and is admitted to the firelit room. He tells us how Joan gave the wanderer her porridge—against her father's argument, for those were times of sore stress

—and how the stranger rewarded them all with the great Song of Roland. The general room would be the setting of that scene.

Behind it is a little dungeon-like apartment which is shown as Joan's chamber. The walls and ceiling of this poor place are very old; possibly they are of Joan's time—no one can really say. In one wall there is a recess, now protected by a heavy wire screen, which means that Joan set up her shrine there, the St. Marguerite and her other holy things. She would pray to them night and morning, but oftener I think she would leave this dim prison for the consolation of the little church across the way.

The whole house is a kind of museum now, and the upper floor is especially fitted with cases for books and souvenirs.

In the grounds there is a fine statue by Mercié, and the whole place is leafy and beautiful. It is not easy, however, to imagine there the presence of Joan. That is easier in the crooked streets of the village, and still easier along the river and the fields. The Fairy Tree—*l'Arbre Fée de Bourlement*—where Joan and her comrades played, and where later she heard the voices, is long since gone, and the spot is marked by a church which we cared to view only from a distance. It seems too bad that any church should be there, and especially that one. The spot itself, marked by a mere tablet. or another tree, would be enough.

It was in January, 1429, that Joan and her uncle Laxart left Domremy for Vaucouleurs to ask the governor to give her a military escort to the un-

crowned king at Chinon. She never came back. Less than half a year later she had raised the siege at Orléans, fought Patay, and conducted the king to his coronation at Rheims. She would have returned then, but the king was afraid to let her go. Neither did he have the courage to follow or support her brilliant leadership. He was weak and paltry. When, as the result of his dalliance, she was captured at Compiègne, he allowed her to suffer a year of wretched imprisonment, making no attempt at rescue or ransom, and in the end to be burned at Rouen as a witch.

I have read in an old French book an attempt to excuse the king, to show that he did not have armed force enough to go to Joan's rescue, but I failed to find there any evidence that he even contemplated such an attempt. I do find that when Joan had been dead thirteen years and France, strong and united, was safe for excursions, he made a trip to Lorraine, accompanied by Dunois, Robert de Baudricourt, and others of Joan's favorite generals. They visited Domremy, and Baudricourt pointed out to the king that there seemed to be a sadness in the landscape. It is said that this visit caused Charles to hasten the process of Joan's rehabilitation—to reverse the verdict of heresy and idolatry and witchcraft under which she had died. But as the new hearing did not begin until eleven years after the king's visit to Domremy, nearly twenty-five years after Joan's martyrdom, the word "hasten" does not seem to apply. If Charles VII finally bestirred himself in that process, it was rather to show before he died that

he held his crown not by the favor of Satan but of saints.

The memory of Joan of Arc's fate must always be a bitter one to France, and the generations have never ceased to make atonement. Her martyrdom has seemed so unnecessary—such a reproach upon the nation she saved.

Yet perhaps it was necessary. Joan in half a year had accomplished what the French armies, without her, had been unable to do in three quarters of a century—she had crippled the English power in France. Her work was not finished—though defeated, the enemy still remained on French soil, and unless relentlessly assailed would recover. After the coronation at Rheims there would seem to have fallen, even upon Joan's loyal followers, a reaction, a period of indifference and indolence. Joan's fearful death at the stake awoke her people as nothing else could have done.

By a lonely roadside far up in Normandy we passed, one day, a small stone column which recorded how upon this spot was delivered the battle of Formigny, April 15th, in the year 1450, under the reign of Charles VII, and how the French were victorious and the English armies forced to abandon Norman soil. Joan of Arc had been dead nineteen years when that final battle was fought, but it was her spirit that gave the victory.

Chapter XXXIII

STRASSBURG AND THE BLACK FOREST

OUR tires were distressingly bad now. I had to do some quick repairing at Domremy, also between Domremy and Vaucouleurs, where we spent the night. Then next morning at Vaucouleurs, in an unfrequented back street behind our ancient inn, I established a general overhauling plant, and patched and relined and trepanned during almost an entire forenoon, while the rest of the family scoured the town for the materials. We put in most of our time at Vaucouleurs in this way. However, there was really little to see in the old town. Our inn was as ancient as anything, and our landlord assured us that Joan's knights probably stopped there, and even Uncle Laxart, but he could not produce his register to prove it. There are the remains of the château where Joan is said to have met the governor, and a monument to the Maid's memory has been begun, but remains unfinished through lack of funds. The real interest in Vaucouleurs, to-day, is that it was the starting point of Joan's great march. One could reflect upon that and repair tires simultaneously.

We got away in time to have luncheon in the beautiful country below Toul, and then kept on to Nancy. At both places there seemed to be nothing but soldiers and barracks, and one did not have to

get out of the car to see those. Not that Nancy is not a fine big town, but its cathedral and its Arch of Triumph are both of the eighteenth century. Such things seemed rather raw and new, while museums did not interest us any more.

Lorraine itself is beautiful. It seemed especially fair where we crossed the line into Germany, and we did not wonder that France could not forget her loss of that fertile land. There was no difficulty at the customs. We were politely O. K.'d by the French officials and courteously passed by the Germans, with no examination beyond our *triptyques*. Then another stretch of fine road and fair fields, and we were in a village of cobbled streets and soldiers—German soldiers—and were told that it was Dieuze; also that there was an inn—a very good inn—a little way down the street. So there was—an inn where they spoke French and German and even a variety of English, and had plenty of good food and good beds for a very modest sum indeed. Dieuze was soon to become a war town, but beyond a few soldiers—nothing unusual—we saw no signs of it that first week in July.

Strassburg was our next stopping place. We put in a day there wandering about its fine streets, looking at its picturesque old houses, its royal palace, and its cathedral. I do not think we cared for the cathedral as we did for those of France. It is very old and very wonderful, and exhibits every form of architecture that has been employed in church building for nearly a thousand years; but in spite of its great size, its imposing height, its rich façade, there

was something repellant about it all, and particularly in its great bare interior. It seemed to lack a certain light of romance, of poetry, of spiritual sympathy that belongs to every French church of whatever size.

And we were disappointed in the wonderful clock. It was very wonderful, no doubt, but we had expected too much. We waited for an hour for the great midday exhibition, and collected with a jam of other visitors in the little clock chapel, expecting all the things to happen that we had dreamed of since childhood. They all did happen, too, but they came so deliberately and with so little liveliness of demonstration that one had to watch pretty closely sometimes to know that anything was happening at all. I think I, for one, had expected that the saints and apostles, and the months and seasons, would all come out and do a grand walk around to lively music. As for the rooster that crows, he does not crow as well as Narcissa, who has the gift of imitation and could have astonished that crowd if she had let me persuade her to try.

There have been several of these Strassburg clocks. There was one of them in the cathedral as far back as 1352. It ran for about two centuries, when another, finished in 1574, took its place. The mechanism of the new clock was worn out in another two centuries, but its framework forms a portion of the great clock of to-day, which dates from 1840. It does a number of very wonderful things, but in this age of contrivance, when men have made mechanical marvels past all belief, the wonder of the Strassburg clock is largely traditional. The rooster that crows

Birthplace of Joan of Arc

Strassburg, Showing the Cathedral

and flaps his wings is really the chief feature, for it is the rooster of the original clock, and thus has daily amused the generations for five hundred years.

Gutenberg, the first printer, began his earliest experiments in a cloister outside the Strassburg gates, and there is a small public square named for him, and in the center of it a fine statue with relief groups of the great printers of all nations. Of course Franklin was there and some other Americans. It gave us a sort of proprietary interest in that neighborhood, and a kindly feeling for the city in general.

It was afternoon when we left Strassburg, and by nightfall we were in the Black Forest—farther in than we had intended to be, by a good deal. With our tires in a steady decline we had no intention of wandering off into dark depths inhabited by fairies and woodcutters and full of weird enchantments, with all of which Grimm's tales had made us quite familiar. We had intended merely to go in a little way, by a main road that would presently take us to Freiburg, where there would be a new supply of patches and linings, and even a possibility of tires, in case our need became very sore.

But the Black Forest made good its reputation for enchantments. When we came to the spot where, by our map, the road should lead to Freiburg, there were only a deserted mill, with a black depth of pine growing where the road should have been. Following along, we found ourselves getting deeper and deeper into the thick forest, while the lonely road became steeper and narrower and more and

more awesome in the gathering evening. There were no villages, no more houses of any kind. There had been rain and the steep hills grew harder to climb. But perhaps a good fairy was helping us, too, a little, for our crippled tires held. Each time we mounted a perpendicular crest I listened for the back ones to go, but they remained firm.

By and by we started down—down *where* we had no notion—but certainly down. Being under a spell, I forgot to put on the engine brake, and by the time we were halfway down the hill the brake bands were hot and smoking. By the time we were down the greasy linings were afire. There was a brook there, and we stopped and poured water on our hot-boxes and waited for them to cool. A woodcutter—he must have been one, for only woodcutters and fairies live in the Black Forest—came along and told us we must go to Haslach—that there was no other road to Freiburg, unless we turned around and went back nearly to Strassburg. I would not have gone back up that hill and through those darkening woods for much money. So we went on and presently came out into a more open space, and some houses; then we came to Haslach.

By our map we were in the depths of the Schwarzwald, and by observation we could see that we were in an old, beautiful village, of the right sort for that locality, and in front of a big inn, where fräuleins came out to take our bags and show us up to big rooms—rooms that had great billowy beds, with other billowy beds for covering. After all, the enchantment was not so bad. And the supper that

night of *Wiener schnitzel* and *pfannekuchen* was certainly good, and hot, and plentiful beyond belief.

But there was more trouble next morning. One of those old back tires was in a desperate condition, and trying to improve it I seemed to make matters worse. I took it off and put in a row of blow-out patches all the way around, after which the inner tubes popped as fast as I could put them in and blow them up. Three times I yanked that tire off, and then it began to occur to me that all those inside patches took up too much room. It would have occurred to any other man sooner, but it takes a long and violent period of pumping exercise to get a brain like mine really loosened up once it is caked by a good night's sleep.

So I yanked those patches out and put on our last hope—a spare tire in fairly decent condition, and patiently patched those bursted tubes—all of which work was done in a hot place under the eyes of a kindly but maddening audience.

Three times in the lovely land between Haslach and Freiburg Narcissa and I had to take off a tire and change tubes, those new patches being not air-proof. Still, we got on, and the scenery made up for a good deal. Nothing could be more picturesque than the Black Forest houses, with their great over-hanging thatched roofs—their rows and clusters of little windows, their galleries and ladders, and their clinging vines. And what kindly people they are. Many of the roads are lined with cherry trees and this was cherry season. The trees were full of gatherers, and we had only to stop and offer to buy

to have them load us with the delicious black fruit, the sweetest, juiciest cherries in the world. They accepted money, but reluctantly; they seemed to prefer to give them to us, and more than once a boy or a man ran along by the car and threw in a great loaded branch, and laughed, and waved and wished us *gute reise*. But this had happened to us in France, too, in the Lorraine.

Chapter XXXIV

A LAND WHERE STORKS LIVE

WE were at Freiburg in the lower edge of the Black Forest some time during the afternoon, one of the cleanest cities I have ever seen, one of the richest in color scheme. Large towns are not likely to be picturesque, but Freiburg, in spite of its general freshness, has a look of solid antiquity—an antiquity that has not been allowed to go to seed. Many of the houses, including the cathedral, are built of a rich red stone, and some of them have outer decorations, and nearly all of them have beautiful flowers in the windows and along the balconies. I should think a dweller in Freiburg would love the place.

Freiburg has been, and still is, celebrated for many things; its universities, its cathedral, its ancient buildings, in recent years for its discovery of "twilight sleep," the latest boon which science has offered to sorrow-laden humanity.

It is a curious road from Freiburg to Basle. Sometimes it is a highway, sometimes it is merely a farm road across fields. More than once we felt sure we were lost and must presently bring up in a farmyard. Then suddenly we would be between fine hedges or trees, on a wide road entering a village.

We had seen no storks when we left Freiburg. We had been told there were some in Strassburg, but

no one had been able to point them out. We were disappointed, for we had pictured in our minds that, once really in the Black Forest, there would be, in almost any direction, a tall chimney surmounted by a big brushy nest, with a stork sitting in it, and standing by, supported on one very slim, very long, very perpendicular leg, another stork, keeping guard. This is the picture we had seen many times in the books, and we were grieved, even rather resentful, that it was not to be found in reality. We decided that it probably belonged only in the books, fairy books, and that while there might have been storks once, just as there had once been fairies, they had disappeared from mortal vision about the same time —that nobody in late years had really seen storks— that—

But just then we really saw some ourselves—sure-enough storks on an old steeple, two of them, exactly as they always are in the pictures, one nice mother stork sitting in a brushy nest and one nice father stork standing on his stiff, perpendicular leg.

We stopped the car to gaze. The church was in an old lost-looking village, which this stork seemed to own, for there were no others, and the few people we saw did not appear to have anything like the stork's proprietary interest. We could hardly take our eyes from that old picture, suddenly made reality.

We concluded, however, that it was probably the only stork family in Germany; but that, also, was a mistake. A little farther along, at another village, was another old stubby steeple, and another pair of storks, both standing this time, probably to see us

go by. Every village had them now, but I think in only one village did we see more than a single pair. That little corner of the Schwarzwald will always remain to us a part separated from the rest of the world—a sort of back-water of fairyland.

The German customs office is on one side of a road, the Swiss on the other, and we stopped in a shady place and interviewed both. We did not dread these encounters any more. We had long since learned that if there was one class of persons abroad likely to be more courteous than others to travelers, that class is the customs officials.

This particular frontier was in the edge of Basle, and presently we had crossed a bridge and were in the city, a big, beautiful city, though not so handsome as Freiburg, not so rich in color, not quite so clean and floral.

We did not stop in Basle. There are wonders to be seen, but, all things considered, we thought it better to go on. With good luck we might reach Vevey next day, our European headquarters and base of supplies. We had been more than two months on the road already; it was important that we get to headquarters—more important than we knew.

Chapter XXXV

BACK TO VEVEY

SO we went wandering through a rather unpopulous, semi-mountainous land—a prosperous land, from the look of it, with big isolated factory plants here and there by strongly flowing streams. They seemed to be making almost everything along those streams. The Swiss are an industrious people. Toward evening we came to a place we had never heard of before, a town of size and of lofty buildings —a place of much manufacturing, completely lost up in the hills, by name Moutier. It was better not to go farther that night, for I could see by our road map that there was going to be some steep climbing between Moutier and the Lake Geneva slope. There are at least two divides between Moutier and Geneva, and Swiss watersheds are something more than mere gentle slopes such as one might meet in Ohio, for instance, or Illinois. They are generally scrambles—they sometimes resemble ladders, though the road surface is usually pretty good, with a few notable exceptions. We met one of these exceptions next morning below Moutier. There had been rains, and the slippery roads between those perpendicular skyscraping bluffs had not dried at all. Our route followed a rushing stream a little way; then it turned into the hill, and at that

point I saw ahead of me a road that was not a road at all, but a semi-perpendicular wallow of mud and stone that went writhing up and up until it was lost somewhere among the trees. I had expected a good deal, but nothing as bad as this. I gave one wild, hopeless thought to our poor crippled rear tires, threw the lever from third to second, from second back to first, and let in every ounce of gasoline the engine would take. It really never occurred to me that we were going to make it. I did not believe anything could hold in that mud, and I expected in another minute to be on the side of the road, with nothing to do but hunt up an ox-team. Whir! slop! slosh! slide!—grind!—on one side and on the other—into a hole and out of it, bump! thump! bang!—why, certainly we are climbing, but we would never make the top, never in the world—it was hardly to be expected of any car; and with those old tires! Never mind, we would go till we stalled, or skidded out of the road.

We were at the turn! We had made the turn! We were going straight up the last rise! Only a little more, now—ten feet—five feet, *six inches! Hooray!* we were on top of the hill, b'gosh!

I got out and looked at the back tires. It was incredible, impossible, but they were as sound and solid as when we left Moutier. Practically our whole weight had been on those tires all the way up that fearful log-haul, for that is what it was, yet those old tubes and outer envelopes had not shown a sign. Explain it if you can.

There was really no trouble after that. There

were hills, but the roads were good. Our last day was a panorama of Swiss scenery in every form; deep gorges where we stopped on bridges to look down at rushing torrents far below; lofty mountains with narrow, skirting roads; beautiful water-fronts and lake towns along the lakes of Biel and Neufchâtel, a final luncheon under a great spreading shade—a birthday luncheon, as it happened—and then, toward the end of the lovely July afternoon, a sudden vision, from high harvest meadows, of the snow-clad mountaintops beyond Lake Geneva—the peaks of the true Alps. And presently one saw the lake itself, the water—hazy, dreamy, summery, with little steamers so gay and toylike, plying up and down—all far below us as yet, for we were still among the high hayfields, where harvesters were pitching and raking, while before and behind us our road was a procession of hay wagons.

It was a continuous coast, now, down to Lausanne—the lake, as it seemed, rising up to meet us, its colors and outlines becoming more vivid, the lofty mountains beyond it approaching a little nearer, while almost underneath us a beautiful city was gleaming in the late afternoon sunshine.

We were by this time among the vineyards that terrace those south-facing steeps to the water's edge. Then we were at the outskirts of the city itself, still descending, still coasting, for Lausanne is built mainly on a mountainside. When we came to a comparative level at last, we were crossing a great bridge—one of those that tie the several slopes of the city together; then presently we were at St.

Frances's church, the chief center, and felt almost at home, for we had been here a good many times before.

We did not stop. Vevey was twelve miles down the lake—we had a feverish desire to arrive there without having to pump those tires again, if possible. Leisurely, happily, we covered that final lap of our long tour. There is no more beautiful drive in Europe than that along Lake Geneva, from Lausanne to Vevey on a summer evening, and there never was a calmer, sweeter summer evening than that of our return. Oh, one must drive slowly on such an evening! We were anxious to arrive, but not to have the drive ended. Far down the lake the little towns we knew so well began to appear—Territet, Montreux, Clarens, Vevey la Tour—we could even make out the towers of Chillon. Then we passed below the ancient village hanging to the mountainside, and there was Vevey, and there at its outskirts our pretty hotel with its big gay garden, the blue lake just in front, the driveway open. A moment more and the best landlady in Europe was welcoming us in the most musical French and German in the world. Our long round was ended—three thousand miles of the happiest travel to be found this side of paradise. By and by I went out to look at our faithful car in the little hotel garage. It had stood up to the last moment on those old tires. I suppose then the tension was too much. The left rear was quite flat.

Chapter XXXVI

THE GREAT UPHEAVAL

IT was the 10th of July that we returned to Vevey, and it was just three weeks later that the world—a world of peace and the social interchange of nations—came to an end.

We had heard at Tours of the assassination of the Austrian archduke and his duchess, but no thought of the long-threatened European war entered our minds. Neither did we discover later any indications of it. If there was any tension along the Franco-German border we failed to notice it. Arriving at Vevey, there seemed not a ripple on the drowsy summer days. Even when Austria finally sent her ultimatum to Serbia there was scarcely a suggestion of war talk. We had all the nations in our hotel, but they assembled harmoniously in the little reading room after dinner over the papers and innocuous games, and if the situation was discussed at all, the word "arbitration" was oftenest heard.

Neither did the news come to us gradually or gently. It came like a bomb, exploded one evening by Billy Baker, an American boy of sixteen and a bulletin of sorts. Billy had been for his customary after-dinner walk uptown, and it was clear the instant he plunged in that he had gathered something unusual.

"Say, folks," he burst out, "did you know that Austria has declared war against Serbia and is bombarding Belgrade, and now all the others are going to declare, and that us Americans have got to beat it for home?"

There was a general stir. Billy's items were often delivered in this abrupt way, but his news facts were seldom questioned. He went on, adding a quick, crisp detail, while the varied nationalities assumed attitudes of attention. The little group around the green center table forgot what they were there for. I had just drawn a spade when I needed a heart, and did not mind the diversion. Billy concluded his dispatches:

"We've all got to beat it, you know, *now*, before all the ships and trains and things are used for mobilization and before the fighting begins. If we don't we'll have to stay here all winter." Then, his mission finished, Billy in his prompt way pulled a chair to the table. "Let me in this, will you?" he said. "I feel awfully lucky to-night."

Americans laugh at most things. We laughed now at Billy Baker—at the dramatic manner of his news, with its picturesque even if stupendous possibilities—at the vision in everyone's mind of a horde of American tourists "beating it" out of Europe at the first drum-roll of war.

But not all in the room laughed. The "little countesses"—two Russian girls—and their white-haired companion, talked rapidly and earnestly together in low voices. The retired French admiral—old and invalided—rose, his long cape flung back

across his shoulder, and walked feebly up and down, stopping at each turn to speak to his aged wife, who sat with their son, himself an officer on leave. An English judge, with a son at home, fraternized with the Americans and tried to be gay with them, but his mirth lacked freedom. A German family instinctively separated themselves from the others and presently were no longer in the room. Even one of the Americans—a Southern girl—laughed rather hysterically:

"All my baggage but one suit case is stored in Frankfort," she said. "If Germany goes to war I'll have a gay time getting it."

Morning brought confirmation of Billy Baker's news, at least so far as Austria's action was concerned, and the imminence of what promised to be a concerted movement of other great nations toward war. It was said that Russia was already mobilizing —that troops were in motion in Germany and in France. That night, or it may have been the next, a telegram came for the young French officer, summoning him to his regiment. His little son of nine or ten raced about excitedly.

"*L'Allemagne a mobilisé—mon père va à la guerre!*"

The old admiral, too feeble, almost, to be out of bed, seemed to take on a new bearing.

"I thought I was done with war," he said. "I am an invalid, and they could not call on me. But if France is attacked I shall go and fight once more for my country."

The German family—there were two grown sons in it—had already disappeared.

It was about the third morning that I took a walk down to the American Consulate. I had been there before, but had not found it exciting. It had been a place of silence and inactivity. There were generally a few flies drifting about, and a bored-looking man who spent an hour or two there morning and afternoon, killing time and glad of any little diversion in the way of company.

The Consulate was no longer a place of silence and buzzing flies. There was buzzing in plenty, but it was made by my fellow countrymen—countrywomen, most of them—who were indeed making things hum. I don't know whether the consul was bored or not. I know he was answering questions at the rate of one per second, and even so not keeping up with the demand for information.

"Is there going to be a war?" "Is England going into it?" "Has Germany declared yet?" "Will we be safe in Switzerland?" "Will all Americans be ordered home?" "Are the trains going to be stopped?" "Will we have to have passports?" "I have got a sailing in September. Will the ships be running then?" "How can I send a letter to my husband in Germany?" "How about money? Are the Swiss banks going to stop payment on letters of credit?"—these, repeated in every varying form, and a hundred other inquiries that only a first-class registered clairvoyant could have answered with confidence. The consul was good-natured. He was also an optimist. His replies in general conveyed the suggestion to "keep cool," that everything was going to be all right.

The Swiss banks, however, did stop payment on

letters of credit and various forms of checks forthwith. I had a very pretty-looking check myself, and a day or two before I had been haggling with the bank man over the rate of exchange, which had been gently declining. I said I would hold it for better terms. But on the day that Germany declared war I decided to cash it, anyway, just to have a little extra money in case—

Oh, well, never mind the details. I didn't cash it. The bank man looked at it, smiled feebly, and pointed to a notice on the wall. It was in French, but it was an "easy lesson." It said:

> No more checks or letters of credit cashed until further notice.
> By order of the Association.

I don't know yet what "Association" it was that was heartless enough to give an order like that, but I hoped it would live to repent it. The bank man said that in view of my position as a depositor he might be induced to advance me 10 per cent of the amount of the check. The next day he even refused to take it for collection. Switzerland is prudent; she had mobilized her army about the second day and sent it to the frontier. We had been down to the big market place to see it go. I never saw anything more quiet—more orderly. She had mobilized her cash in the same prompt, orderly fashion and sent it into safe retirement.

It was a sorrowful time, and it was not merely American—it was international. Switzerland never saw such a "busted community" as her tourists pre-

sented during August, 1914. Every day was Black Friday. Almost nobody had any real money. A Russian nobleman in our hotel with a letter of credit and a roll of national currency could not pay for his afternoon tea. The little countesses had to stop buying chocolates. An American army officer, retired, was unable to meet his laundry bill. Even Swiss bank notes (there were none less than fifty francs in the beginning) were of small service, for there was no change. All the silver had disappeared as if it had suddenly dissolved. As for gold—lately so plentiful—one no longer even uttered the *word* without emotion. Getting away, "beating it," as Billy had expressed it, was still a matter of prime importance, but it had taken second place. The immediate question was how and where to get money for the "beating" process. The whole talk was money. Any little group collected on the street might begin by discussing the war, but, in whatever language, the discussion drifted presently to finance. The optimistic consul was still reassuring. To some he advanced funds—he was more liberal than the Bank of Switzerland.

There was a percentage, of course—a lucky few—who had money, and these were getting away. There were enough of them along the Simplon Railway to crowd the trains. Every train for Paris went through with the seats and aisles full. All schedules were disordered. There was no telling when a train would come, or when it would arrive in Paris. Billy Baker promptly mobilized his party and they left sometime in the night—or it may have been in the morning,

after a night of waiting. It was the last regular train to go. We did not learn of its fortunes.

No word came back from those who left us. They all went with promises to let us know, but a veil dropped behind them. They were as those who pass beyond the things of earth. We heard something of their belongings, however. Sometimes on clear days a new range of mountains seemed to be growing in the west. It was thought to be the American baggage heaped on the French frontier. Very likely our friends wrote to us, but there was no more mail. The last American, French, and English letters came August 3d. The last Paris *Herald* hung on the hotel file and became dingy and tattered with rereading. No mails went out. One could amuse himself by writing letters and dropping them in the post office, but he would know, when he passed a week later, that they had remained there. You could still cable, if you wished to do so—in French—and there must have been a scramble in America for French dictionaries, and a brisk hunting for the English equivalents of whatever terse Berlitz idiom was used to convey:

"Money in a hurry—dead broke."

Various economies began to be planned or practiced. Guests began to do without afternoon tea, or to make it themselves in their rooms. Few were paying their hotel bills, yet some went to cheaper places, frightened at the reckoning that was piling up against settling day. Others, with a little store of money, took very modest apartments and did light housekeeping to stretch their dwindling substance. Some, even among those at the hotels, in view of the

general uncertainty, began to lay in tinned meats and other durable food against a time of scarcity. It was said that Switzerland, surrounded by war, would presently be short of provisions. Indeed, grocers, by order of the authorities, had already cut down the sale of staples, and no more than a pound or two of any one article was sold to a single purchaser. Hotels were obliged to send their servants, one after another, and even their guests, to get enough sugar and coffee and salt to go around. Hotel bills of fare—always lavish in Switzerland—began to be cut down, by *request of the guests themselves*. It was a time to worry, or—to "beat it" for home.

We fell into the habit of visiting the Consulate each morning. When we had looked over the little local French paper and found what new nations had declared war against Germany overnight, we strolled down to read the bulletins on the Consulate windows, which generally told us what steamer lines had been discontinued, and how we couldn't get money on our checks and letters of credit. Inside, an active commerce was in progress. No passport had been issued from that Consulate for years. Nobody in Europe needed one. You could pass about as freely from Switzerland to France or Germany as you could from Delaware to New Jersey.

Things were different now. With all Europe going to war, passports properly viséd were as necessary as train tickets. The consul, swamped with applications, had called for volunteers, and at several little tables young men were saying that they did not know most of the things those anxious people—

women, mainly—were asking about, but that everything would surely be all right, soon. Meantime, they were helping their questioners make out applications for passports.

There were applications for special things—personal things. There was a woman who had a husband lost somewhere in Germany and was convinced he would be shot as a spy. There was a man who had been appointed to a post office in America and was fearful of losing it if he did not get home immediately. There were anxious-faced little schoolteachers who had saved for years to pay for a few weeks abroad, and were now with only some useless travelers' checks and a return ticket on a steamer which they could not reach, and which might not sail even if they reached it. And what of their positions in America? Theirs were the sorrowful cases, and there were others.

But the crowd was good-natured, as a whole—Americans are generally that. The stranded ones saw humor in their situation, and confessed to one another—friends and strangers alike—their poverty and their predicaments, laughing a good deal, as Americans will. But there were anxious faces, too, and everybody wanted to know a number of things, which he asked of everybody else, and of the consul—oh, especially of the consul—until that good-natured soul was obliged to take an annex office upstairs where he could attend to the manufacture of passports, while downstairs a Brooklyn judge was appointed to supervise matters and deal out official information in judicial form.

The judge was qualified for his appointment. Every morning before ten o'clock—opening time—he got together all the matters—letters, telegrams, and the like—that would be apt to interest the crowd, and dealt this substance out in a speech, at the end of which he invited inquiries on any point he had failed to make clear.

He got them, too—mainly questions that he had already answered, because there is a type of mind which does not consider information valid unless delivered to it individually and in person. I remember, once, when among other wild rumors it had been reported that because of the food scarcity all foreigners would be ordered out of Switzerland in five days, a woman who had listened attentively to the judge's positive and thrice-repeated denial of this canard promptly asked him if she could stay in Switzerland if she wanted to.

The judge's speech became the chief interest of the day. It was the regular American program to assemble in front of the Consulate, exchanging experiences and reading the bulletins until opening time. The place was in a quiet side street of the quaint old Swiss city, a step from the lake-front promenade, with a background of blue mountains and still bluer water. Across the street stood a sixteenth-century château with its gardens of greenery. At ten the Consulate doors opened and the little group pressed in for the speech. I am sure no one in our stranded assembly will easily forget those mornings.

Promising news began to come. The judge an-

nounced one morning that five hundred thousand francs had been placed to the consular credit in Switzerland by America for the relief of her citizens. Great happiness for the moment! Hope lighted every face. Then some mathematician figured that five hundred thousand francs amounted to a hundred thousand dollars, and that there were ten thousand Americans in Switzerland—hence, ten dollars apiece. The light of hope grew dim. There was not a soul in that crowd who needed less than two hundred dollars to pay his board and get him home. Ten thousand times two hundred—it is a sizable sum. And what of the rest of Europe? The mathematician figured that there were a quarter of a million Americans in Europe, all willing to go home, and that it would take fifty million dollars and a fleet of five hundred fair-sized ships to deliver them in New York.

Still, that five hundred thousand francs served a good purpose. An allotment of it found its way to our consul, to use at his discretion. It came to the right man. Here and there were those who had neither money nor credit. To such he had already advanced money from his own limited supply. His allowance, now, would provide for those needy ones until more came. It was not sufficient, however, to provide one woman with three hundred francs to buy a set of furs she had selected, though she raged up and down the office and threatened to report him to Washington, and eventually flung some papers in his face. It turned out later that she was not an American. I don't know what she was—mostly wildcat, I judge.

Further news came—still better. The government would send a battleship—the *Tennessee*—with a large sum of gold. The deposit of this specie in the banks of Europe would make checks and letters of credit good again. Various monies from American banks, cabled for by individuals, would also arrive on this ship.

Things generally looked brighter. With the British fleet protecting the seas, English, French, and Dutch liners were likely to keep their schedules; also, there were some Italian boats, though these were reported to be overrun by "swell" Americans who were paying as high as one thousand dollars for a single berth. Perhaps the report was true—I don't know. None of our crowd cared to investigate.

There were better plans nearer home—plans for "beating it" out of Switzerland on a big scale. Special trains were to be provided—and ships. A commission was coming on the *Tennessee* to arrange for these things. The vessel had already left New York.

The crowd at the Consulate grew larger and more feverishly interested. Applications for passports multiplied. Over and over, and in great detail, the Brooklyn judge explained just what was necessary to insure free and safe departure from Europe when the time came to go. Over and over we questioned him concerning all those things, and concerning ever so many other things that had no particular bearing on the subject, and he bore it and beamed on us and was fully as patient as was Moses in that other wilderness we wot of.

Trains began to run again through France; at least they started, and I suppose they arrived somewhere. Four days, six days, eight days was said to be the time to Paris, with only third-class coaches, day and night, all the aisles full—no food and no water except what was carried. It was not a pleasant prospect and few of our people risked it. The *Tennessee* was reported to have reached England and the special American trains were promised soon. In fact, one was presently announced. It went from Lindau, through Germany, and was too far east for most of our crowd. Then there were trains from Lucerne and elsewhere; also, special English trains. Then, at last a Simplon train was scheduled: Territet, Montreux, Vevey, Lausanne, Geneva—all aboard for Paris!

Great excitement at the Consulate. The *Tennessee* money could arrive any day now; everybody could pay up and start. The Brooklyn judge rehearsed each morning all the old details and presented all the news and requirements. The train, he said, would go through a nation that was at war. It would be under military surveillance. Once on the train, one must stay on it until it arrived in Paris. In Paris passengers must go to the hotels selected, they must leave at the time arranged and by the train provided, and must accept without complaint the ship and berth assigned to each. It would be a big tourist party personally conducted by the United States for her exiled citizens. The United States was not ordering its citizens to leave Switzerland; it was merely providing a means for those who

must go at once and had not provided for themselves. The coaches would be comfortable, the price as usual, red cards insuring each holder a seat would be issued at the Consulate. Tickets through to New York would be provided for those without funds. The government could do no more. Any questions, please?

Then a sharp-faced, black-haired, tightly hooked woman got up and wanted to know just what style the coaches would be—whether they would have aisles down the side; whether there would be room to lie down at will; whether meals would be served on the train; whether there would be time at Dijon to get off and see some friends; whether she could take her dog; whether her ticket would be good on another train if she didn't like this one when she saw it. The judge will probably never go into the tourist-agency business, even if he retires from the law.

Well, that particular train did not go, after all. Or, rather, it did go, but few of our people went on it. There was a misunderstanding somewhere. The Germans were getting down pretty close to Paris just then, and from the invisible "somewhere" an order came countermanding the train. The train didn't hear of it, however, and not all of the people. Those who took it must have had plenty of room, and they must have gone through safely. If the Germans got them we should have heard of it, I think. Those who failed to take it were not entirely sorry. The *Tennessee* money had not been distributed yet, and it was badly needed. I don't know

what delayed it. Somewhere—always in that invisible "somewhere"—there was a hitch about that, too. It still had not arrived when the *next* train was scheduled—at least, not much of it. It had not come on the last afternoon of the last day, when the train was to go early in the morning. It was too bad. There was a borrowing and an arranging and a negotiating at the banks that had become somewhat less obdurate these last days, with the *Tennessee* in the offing. But many went away pretty short, and, but for the consul, the shortness would have been shorter and more general.

It was a fine, big, comfortable train that went next morning. A little group of us who were not yet ready to "beat it" went down to see our compatriots go. There seemed to be room enough, and at least some of the coaches had aisles down the sides. I do not know whether the sharp-faced, tightly hooked woman had her dog or not. There was a great waving, and calling back, and much laughter as the train rolled away. You could tell as easily as anything that the Americans were "beating it" for home.

Heavy installments of the *Tennessee* money began to arrive at the Consulate next day. I got some of it myself.

A day or two later I dropped into the Consulate. It had become a quiet place again, as in the days that already seemed very long ago. It was hard to believe in the reality of the eager crowd that used to gather there every morning to tell their troubles and laugh over them, and to collect the morning news.

Now, again, the place was quite empty, except for a few flies drowsing about and the rather tired, bored-looking man who came to spend an hour or two there every morning, killing time and glad of any little diversion in the way of company.

Chapter XXXVII

THE LONG TRAIL ENDS

IT was not until near the end of October that we decided to go. We had planned to remain for another winter, but the aspect of things did not improve as the weeks passed. With nine tenths of Europe at war and the other tenth drilling, there was a lack of repose beneath the outward calm, even of Vevey. In the midst of so many nervous nations, to linger until spring might be to remain permanently.

Furthermore, our occupations were curtailed. Automobiles were restricted, the gasoline supply cut off. The streets had a funereal look. I was told that I could get a special permit to use the car, but as our gasoline supply consisted of just about enough to take us over the Simplon Pass into Italy, we decided to conserve it for that purpose. The pass closes with the first big snow, usually the 15th of October. The presence of many soldiers there would keep it open this year a little longer. It could not be risked, however, later than the end of the month.

We debated the matter pretty constantly, for the days of opportunity were wasting. We wasted ten of them making a little rail and pedestrian trip around Switzerland, though in truth those ten glorious days of October tramping along the lakes and through

the hills are not likely to be remembered as really wasted by any of us. When we returned I got a military pass to take the car out of Switzerland, but it was still another week before we packed our heavy baggage and shipped it to Genoa. We were a fair example of any number of families, no longer enthralled by Europe and not particularly needed at home. I think hesitation must have nearly killed some people.

It was the 27th of October—a perfect morning—when for the last time I brought the car to the front of our hotel, and we strapped on our bags and with sad hearts bade good-by to the loveliest spot and the best people in Europe. Then presently we were working our way through the gay, crowded market place (though we did not feel gay) down through the narrow, familiar streets, with their pretty shops where we had bought things, and their little *pâtisseries* where we had eaten things; down through La Tour, and along the lake to Clarens and Montreux, and past Chillon, and so up the valley of the Rhone to Brigue, the Swiss entrance to the Simplon Pass.

We had new tires now, and were not troubled about our going; but the world had grown old and sad in three months, and the leaves were blowing off of the trees, and the glory had gone out of life, because men were marching and killing one another along those happy fields that such a little while before had known only the poppy stain and the marching of the harvesters—along those shady roads where good souls had run with the car to hand us cherries and wish us "*Gute reise.*"

We crossed the Simplon in the dullness of a gray mist, and at the top, six hundred feet in the peaks, met the long-delayed snowstorm, and knew that we were crossing just in time.

Down on the Italian slope the snow turned to rain and the roads were not good. The Italians dump rock into their roads and let the traffic wear it down. We were delayed by a technicality on the Swiss border, and it was dark by the time we were in Italy —dark and rainy. Along the road are overhanging galleries—really tunnels, and unlighted. Our prestolite had given out and our oil lamps were too feeble. I have never known a more precarious drive than across that long stretch from Gondo to Domodossola, through the night and pouring rain. It seemed endless, and when the lights of the city first appeared I should have guessed the distance still to be traveled at forty miles. But we did arrive; and we laid up three days in a hotel where it was cold—oh, very cold—but where blessedly there was a small open fire in a little sitting room. Also, the food was good.

It had not quit raining even then, but we started, anyway. One can get a good deal of Domodossola in three days, though it is a very good town, where few people stop, because they are always going somewhere else when they get there. Our landlady gave us a huge bunch of flowers at parting, too huge for our limited car space. A little way down the road I had to get out and fix something; an old woman came and held an umbrella over me, and, having no Italian change, I gave her the flowers, and a Swiss nickel, and a German five-pfennig piece, and she

thanked me just as if I had contributed something valuable. The Italians are polite.

We went to Stresa on Lake Maggiore, and stopped for the night, and visited Isola Bella, of course, and I bought a big red umbrella which the others were ashamed of, and fell away from me when I opened it as if I had something contagious. They would rather get soaking wet, they said, than be seen walking under that thing. Pride is an unfortunate asset. But I didn't have the nerve myself to carry that umbrella on the streets of Milan. Though Stresa is not far away, its umbrellas are unknown in Milan, and when I opened it my audience congested traffic. I didn't suppose anything could be too gay for an Italian.

We left the car at Milan and made a rail trip to Venice. It was still raining every little while and many roads were under water, so that Venice really extended most of the way to Milan, and automobile travel was thought to be poor in that direction. All the old towns over there we visited, for we were going home, and no one could say when Europe might be comfortable for tourists again. A good deal of the time it rained, but a good deal of the time it didn't, and we slept in hotels that were once palaces, and saw much, including Juliet's tomb at Verona, and all the things at Padua, and we bought violets at Parma, and sausages at Bologna. Then we came back to Milan and drove to Genoa, stopping overnight at Tortona, because we thought we would be sure to find there the ices by that name. But they were out of them, I suppose, for we could not find any.

Still we had no definite plans about America; but when at Genoa we found we could ship the car on a pretty little Italian vessel and join the same little ship ourselves at Naples, all for a very reasonable sum, I took the shipping man to the hotel garage, turned the car over to him, and the thing was done.

So we traveled by rail to Pisa, to Florence, to Rome, to Naples and Pompeii, stopping as we chose; for, as I say, no one could tell when Europe would be a visiting place again, and we must see what we could.

So we saw Italy, in spite of the rain that fell pretty regularly, and the rather sharp days between-time. We did not know that those rains were soaking down to the great central heat and would produce a terrible earthquake presently, or we might have been rather more anxious to go. As it was, we were glad to be there and really enjoyed all the things.

Yet, there was a different feeling now. The old care-freedom was gone; the future had become obscure. The talk everywhere was of the war; in every city soldiers were marching, fine, beautiful regiments, commanded by officers that were splendidly handsome in their new uniforms. We were told that Italy would not go to war—at least not until spring, but it was in the air, it was an ominous cloud. Nowhere in Europe was anything the same.

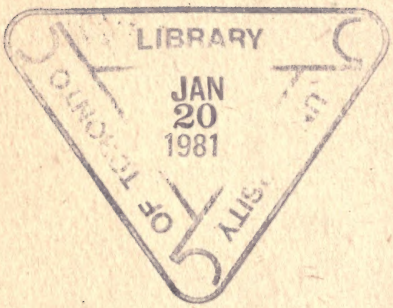
One day our little ship came down from Genoa, and we went aboard and were off next morning. We lay a day at Palermo, and then, after some days of calm sailing in the Mediterranean, launched out into the Atlantic gales and breasted the storms for

nearly two weeks, pitching and rolling, but homeward bound.

A year and four months from a summer afternoon when we had stood on the upper deck of a little French steamer in Brooklyn and looked down into the hold at a great box that held our car, I went over to Hoboken and saw it taken from another box, and drove it to Connecticut alone, for the weather was cold, the roads icy. It was evening when I arrived, Christmas Eve, and when I pushed back the wide door, drove into the barn, cut off the engine, and in the dim winter light saw our capable conveyance standing in its accustomed place, I had the curious feeling of never having been away at all, but only for a winter's drive, dreaming under dull skies of summertime and France. And the old car—that to us had always seemed to have a personality and sentience—had it been dreaming, too?

It was cold there, and growing dark. I came out and locked the door. We had made the circuit—our great adventure was over. Would I go again, under the same conditions? Ah me! that wakens still another dream—for days ahead. I suppose one should not expect more than one real glimpse of heaven in this world, but at least one need not give up hoping.

THE END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